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ONSCREEN CHEMISTRY OFF-SCREEN?

NO WAY, SAYS BRADLEY COOPER OF SERENA CO-STAR J-LAW. 'I COULD BE HER FATHER' PAGE 23

Coun. Ross Eadie stands at a Canada Post community mailbox on Aikins Street between Partridge and Leila avenues. BERNICE PONTANILLA/METRO

Mailboxes still not accessible: Eadie

Councillor talks 'responsibility.'
Motion likely to touch on no-parking signs and snow clearing

BERNICE PONTANILLA
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A city councillor says Canada Post isn't making sure its new community mailboxes are fully accessible — and he plans to deliver a message.

Coun. Ross Eadie told Metro on Thursday that he's working on a motion for the Dec. 10 meeting that will tackle three areas of concern his constituents have on the community mailboxes that were recently installed in his ward.

Eadie said the first area of concern is vehicles parking in front of the boxes, making it difficult for residents to retrieve their mail.

"People are demanding to have no-parking signs so they can get their mail," said Eadie, adding Canada Post should foot the bill for the signs.

"The problem is Canada Post says, 'Oh no, people are supposed to walk,' but that's not the reality."

The other two areas relate to snow clearing, namely who takes responsibility for the windrows and for any sidewalks in close proximity.

"It needs to be clear that windrows are the responsibility of Canada Post for clearing," said Eadie, adding that many mailboxes are located on priority-three streets, meaning they don't get plowed as quickly as other streets.

"I believe Canada Post needs to be responsible for the property that it is adjacent to, like any other resident of this city (according to the Neighbourhood Liveability Bylaw)."

Eadie said he's working on the final wording of his motion.

A city spokesperson said Canada Post made the final decision on where mailboxes were located. However, there were consultations.

"Some of the suggestions that were made by the city include keeping in mind things such as snow storage, vehicle and pedestrian safety and proximity to transit stops, etc.," said the spokesperson.

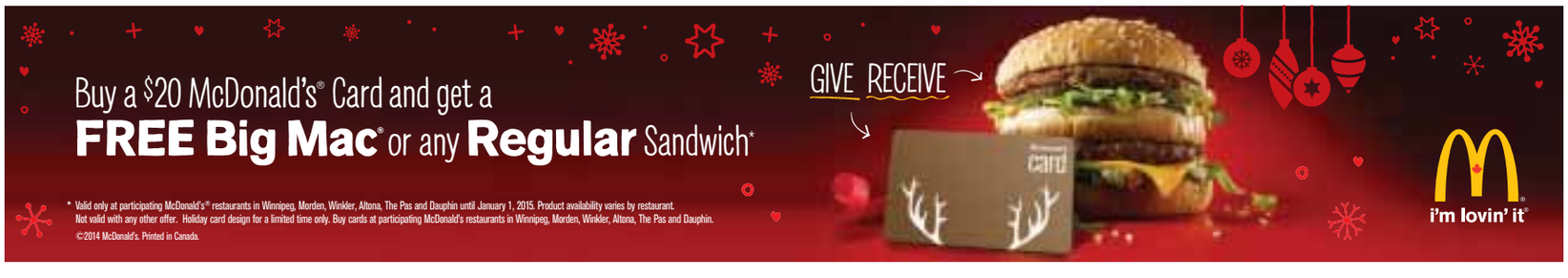
In an interview with Metro earlier this year, Canada Post's Winnipeg general manager Bill Davidson said Canada Post hires contractors to remove snow around mailboxes to make sure they're accessible to all.

An email to Canada Post asking for comment on Eadie's concerns was not responded to by press time.

Give them a sign

"The problem is Canada Post says, 'Oh no, people are supposed to walk,' but that's not the reality."

Coun. Ross Eadie on vehicles parking in front of mailboxes. He says Canada Post should foot the bill for no-parking signs that residents are requesting.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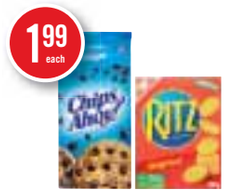

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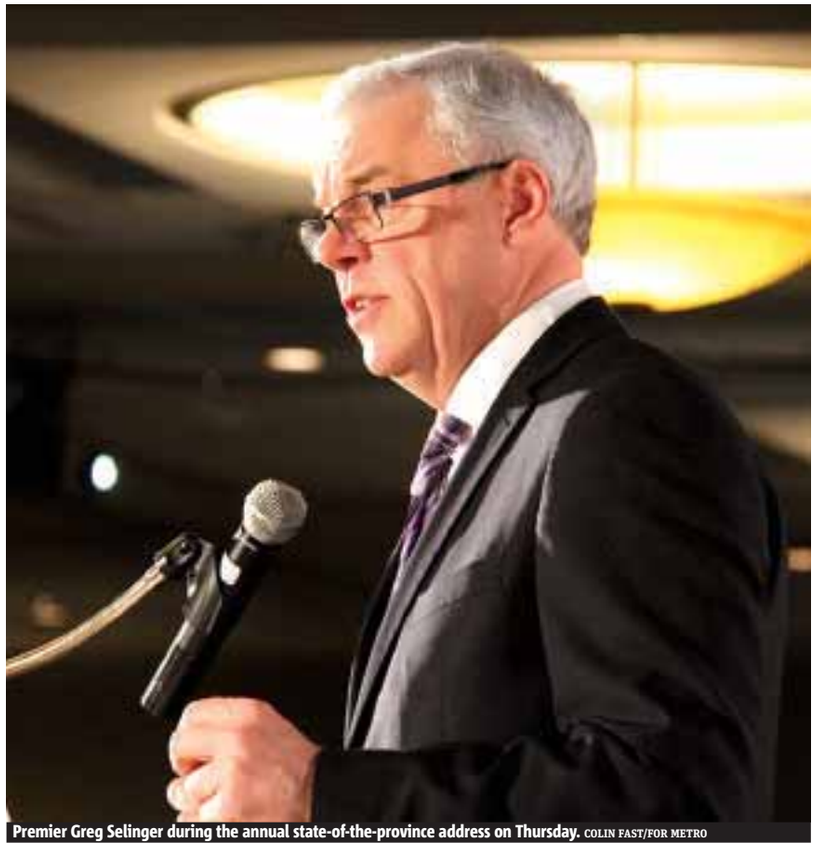
Pressure mounts for Selinger to step down

Politics. Members of NDP council fear complications if leadership candidates remain at their posts during upcoming race


Premier Greg Selinger during the annual state-of-the-province address on Thursday. COLIN FAST/FOR METRO

Premier Greg Selinger faced increasing pressure Thursday to step down while he faces a leadership challenge that will culminate in a vote at his party's annual convention in March.

Some members of the NDP council, the party's governing body that is to meet Saturday, want Selinger and any cabinet ministers who run against him to leave their posts while the race is on. One council member, Curtis Nordman, has written a resolution for Saturday's meeting that calls on Selinger to step down to ensure there is a level playing field.

Nordman said the resolution would not be legally binding on the premier, but could be persuasive if a majority of the 140-member council supports it.

"Legally, there is nothing to tell a cabinet minister or a premier to step aside … but the perception of them staying in positions of authority, I think, is a whole different matter," he said.

"What if one of (Selinger's) cabinet ministers wants to back somebody else? How do they do that and … how does cabinet function under that kind of stress?"

Another council member, Matt Schaubroeck, supported Nordman's idea and said it would prevent the possibility that politicians and staff might be penalized for choosing one candidate over another. Schaubroeck said another worry is that Selinger and any cabinet minister who runs will be distracted from preparing the spring budget.

"If leadership candidates are involved in that process, especially the premier, there is the risk of either the process being used as a campaign platform for one candidate, or the process being ignored because the leadership campaign is taking up too much time for the minister to give the budget the attention it deserves," Schaubroeck wrote in an email.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Businesses

'Shenanigans' unsettle WCC CEO

In his annual state-of-the-province speech at the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce (WCC) Thursday, Premier Greg Selinger touted the province's stable economy.

He also listed recent government initiatives such as new school programs and new investments in hospitals and child-care centres.

WCC CEO Dave Angus didn't seem very impressed with his guest on Thursday.

"It's great that he's saying what he's saying, but does he have his caucus behind him?" Angus asked. "There are decisions being made in different departments with brand new ministers and we don't know whether they're going to stick."

Angus said businesses operate on certainty, and the "shenanigans" surrounding the NDP leadership are hurting Manitoba's reputation.

"When stories about our political dysfunction hit the front page of the Globe and Mail, it sends a very negative signal to other jurisdictions … in terms of Manitoba as a place to invest and do business."

COLIN FAST/FOR METRO, WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

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5 weirdest police auction items

This Sunday the Winnipeg Police Service is auctioning off hundreds of unclaimed items they've collected over the last few months, including recovered stolen property and seized items. The list of things on the block (check them out at winnipeg.ca/police/auctions) ranges from tools and toys to sports jerseys and jewelry, but there's a few oddities available as well. Here are five of the strangest:

SHANE GIBSON
shane.gibson@metronews.ca

1 Item 85: Two shovels

Who wants one stolen or seized shovel when you could have two? The shovels are being auctioned off as a pair, and we hope they go to someone who will really dig them.

2 Item 138: Bike seat

We're guessing the thief who stole this bike really wishes they had remembered to steal the seat as well. That's gotta be a rough ride.

3 Item 242: Oversized deck of cards in case

Even if you're not in the market for an oversized deck of cards right now, really, how often are you going to get the chance to pick up a used deck WITH the case? Sold.

4 Item 396: Ladies' engagement ring

Your sweetie's going to love this. If she says yes to a used engagement ring that may or may not be stolen property bought from a police auction, she's a keeper.

5 Item 226: Miscellaneous Lego

Wondering what happened to that Lego you stole? The Winnipeg Police Service has it! Now you can finish building that ladder you've been working on to climb out of your jail cell.

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‘I try not to think about the bad things’

Colten Pratt, 26, has been missing since Nov. 6. HANDOUT/FACEBOOK

Colten Pratt. Mother of man missing since Nov. 6 still remains hopeful that her son will be found alive

Lydia Daniels hasn’t dared close her Facebook page in nearly a month. It’s how she and her son keep in touch, and if Colten Pratt is alive, she doesn’t want to miss his message.

Pratt, 26, vanished without a trace on Nov. 6 after spending the evening drinking with friends at the Regal Beagle bar on Smith Street.

“I try not to think about the bad things that could have happened to him,” Daniels told Metro this week. “If I speculate, my mind and my heart all start to break down.”

Pratt is from Long Plain First Nation, about 30 kilometres southwest of Portage la Prairie, but had been staying with relatives in Winnipeg for a few weeks while looking for work.

In the meantime, Pratt had been volunteering in Winnipeg, and Daniels said he was enjoying his time in the city. She also said it isn’t like him to not keep in contact.

“He’d always let me know where he was, what he was doing and who he was with,” said Daniels, who called police three days after Pratt’s last contact with her. “I don’t know if it was a mother’s instinct, but my gut feeling told me I had to (report him missing).”

Daniels said she’s been overwhelmed with support from friends and family, who have set up a Facebook page, put up posters throughout Winnipeg and gone out on several search missions.

Pratt is aboriginal, five feet 10 inches tall, roughly 160 pounds with a thin build, short brown hair and brown eyes. He was last seen wearing a grey T-shirt, brown plaid jacket, blue jeans and a grey tuque.

Anyone with any information about Pratt’s whereabouts is being asked to call police at 204-986-6250. SHANE GIBSON/METRO

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Police spokesman Const. Jason Michalyshen speaks to media Thursday after four people were arrested in connection with theft of more than 40 Canada Goose jackets last month. SHANE GIBSON/METRO

4 charged after Kijiji ad for stolen jackets

A Kijiji ad offering a too-good-to-be-true price on Canada Goose jackets led police to four people now facing charges in connection to the theft of $15,000 worth of the high-end winter gear last month.

Thieves made off with more than 40 women’s Canada Goose jackets after breaking through the front window of Tamarack Casual and Outdoor Clothing at 2090 Corydon Ave. on Nov. 16.

Police said an ad offering the heavily discounted jackets was placed online the very next day, directing possible customers to a convenience store in the 700 block of Selkirk Avenue.

Police arrested a 35-year-old man at the store and charged him with possession of property obtained by crime.

Police released photos of two female suspects in the case Monday, and said Thursday tips from the public about the two women and the Kijiji ad helped lead to three further arrests.

Tahnee Wapash, 27, of Winnipeg is charged with break and enter, and possession of property obtained by crime.

Cornell Lee Belanger, 33, of Winnipeg is charged with break and enter, and a 29-year-old woman is also facing charges of possession of property obtained by crime.

Only three of the stolen jackets were recovered. Police expect to make further arrests.

SHANE GIBSON/METRO

MLS listings up 20% from November '13

A buyer's market.
1,500 more homes up for sale than usual over the past 10 years, say analysts

New record

Dollar value of MLS listings is down only one per cent over this time last year. It is still at a total of about $3.4 billion for the year, which, Squire said, is a new record.

With 4,000 listings up for sale, Winnipeg has become a buyer's market.

WinnipegREALTORS say MLS listings at the end of November are up 20 per cent from 2013 — 1,500 more homes up for sale than usual over the past 10 years.

Peter Squire, MLS market analyst, said the buyer's market isn't a concern, it's just a change that's providing more opportunities.

"Change isn't a bad thing," he said. "We're just pointing out that there is a lot of inventory we're carrying into the last month. We're trying to present it as an opportunity to buyers who have lost out in prior years when the market was more heated.

"In many of these areas, there's a lot more choice."

In November, houses sat on the market for 34 days, while condos saw 46 days on the market. Squire said elsewhere in Canada listings can sit on the market for more than 50 days.

But while housing sales have dropped five per cent, condo sales have increased 19 per cent over November of last year.

Squire said while there's no hard numbers, it's likely that baby boomers and empty nesters are choosing to sell their homes and move into condos, where they have more options.

ADRIANA MINGO FOR METRO WINNIPEG

Post-Parliament Hill shooting

Security personnel demonstrate a new scanner at the Manitoba Legislature Thursday morning. Visitors to the building are now required to have their bags scanned before entering. The scanner is part of a series of security changes made following the shootings at Parliament Hill in October. COLIN FAST/METRO

'Relentless attack'

Brothers jailed in cyberbullying case

Two Manitoba brothers have been sentenced to 16 months in jail for tormenting and sexually exploiting a 14-year-old girl online.

A judge says the two brothers from Dauphin met the girl on Facebook, where they threatened her unless she sent nude photos.

She complied and the judge says the girl was then subjected to what he called "relentless attack" with further demands for more explicit pictures and sexual acts.

The judge says the brothers, who were 17 at the time, distributed the photos through social media.

The brothers, who cannot be named, pleaded guilty to four charges including sexual touching, as well as possession and distribution of child pornography.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

University of Winnipeg

Cops search for suspect in sexual assault

Police are looking for a suspect with squinty eyes after a woman was groped at the University of Winnipeg Wednesday.

The 23-year-old victim told police the suspect was watching her before coming up behind her and groping her in the lower body as she headed up the escalators just before noon. The suspect is described as roughly 22 years old, with a dark or tanned complexion, five feet six inches tall, with a heavy build, squinty eyes, and a clean-shaven face. He was wearing a black faded jacket with faded yellow reflective tape on the front.

Anyone with information should call investigators at 204-986-6668 or Winnipeg CrimeStoppers at 204-786-TIPS. METRO

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Cindy Coker of SEED Winnipeg talks homelessness with executive policy committee members during Wednesday's meeting. BERNICE PONTANILLA/METRO

Mayor's team backs homeless strategy

Executive policy committee. Mayor says municipality can draw allies to cause

BERNICE PONTANILLA
bernice.pontanilla@metronews.ca

Mayor Brian Bowman made it clear he supports the city taking an active role in Winnipeg's homelessness problem.

During Wednesday's executive policy committee meeting, Bowman and Coun. Jeff Browaty went head-to-head over the issue of whether affordable housing is a municipal responsibility.

The Long Term Strategy to End Homelessness is a 10-year plan developed by a task force — called the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Council — made up of stakeholders in the business, non-profit and government sectors.

The strategy touches on four key areas: prevention, creating a person-centred system of care, housing supply, and measurement.

"By taking the actions that are proposed in this resolution, we will in fact lead and we'll see other partners step up and join in a collaborative model to really combat homelessness," said Bowman.

Browaty, meanwhile, said he hopes the strategy is immensely successful, but is concerned there are too many groups doing the same work.

Cindy Coker, executive director of SEED Winnipeg, told EPC members that everyone knows "the status quo is not working" when it comes to homelessness.

What's needed is a plan and action, she added.

"Our plan calls for the creation of 300 affordable housing units in the shorter term, while working to increase affordable housing in private, non-profit and public sectors by 7,500."

The motion, which EPC passed on Wednesday, would see the city contribute $150,000 a year, "subject to annual budgetary approvals," from 2015 to 2019.

Committee keeps Dalnavert grant despite museums' plea

The $19,950 grant for the still-closed Dalnavert Museum won't be redistributed to other museums — yet.

On Wednesday, members of the city's executive policy committee (EPC) chose to delay a decision on redistributing the grant money until June 1 of next year in order to see if the Dalnavert museum can reopen by May 31.

This comes despite the redistribution request from the city Museums Board and a plea from representatives of the Musée de Saint-Boniface Museum, which would have seen an extra $8,891 had the motion passed.

Jean Paul Gobeil lobbies for Dalnavert funds at Wednesday's meeting. BERNICE PONTANILLA/METRO

"Reallocation of the funds would allow us to re-staff, and I say re-staff because the cuts of 2013 forced us to reduce working hours and also release a few of our young guides, interpreters, most of whom are students," said Jean Paul Gobeil, chair of the board of directors for the St. B museum, during the Wednesday morning EPC meeting.

The protection and community services committee had approved the Museum Board's redistribution request at its Nov. 24 meeting.

BERNICE PONTANILLA/METRO

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Winnipeg letter carrier chugs along to Beer Mile World title

Corey Gallagher. Long-distance runner downs four cold ones on way to take first ever championship

SHANE GIBSON
shane.gibson@metronews.ca

A Winnipeg letter carrier can now say he's literally the world's fastest beer drinker.

Long distance runner Corey Gallagher, 27, brought home the blue ribbon at the first ever Beer Mile World Championship in Austin, Texas, Wednesday night.

The contest sees runners pound four beers during a one-mile race. Starting with one before the race starts, runners then stop for three more quick ones every quarter-mile of the contest. Anyone who vomits is forced to take an extra lap.

"It's not so much about going out there and getting drunk or just hammering these beers to see who can drink them the fastest and who can get drunk," explained Gallagher from Texas Thursday, calling the race more of an endurance contest to see who can perform the best while battling the disadvantages brought on by a few cold ones. "The second you put the beer in there you're burping, it's carbonated, it starts foaming up. We use the beer because it's such an unknown factor of how everybody is going to handle it."

Gallagher, who has won the Manitoba Marathon's half-marathon twice, said the sudsy sport has been an "underground event" runners have been taking part in for years, and this week's world championships marks its mainstream debut.

He's been doing it for about 10 years, and in that time has trimmed his time down to a level that put him among the favourites to win in Austin.

In the end he edged out his closest competitor, American Michael Cunningham, with a final time of 5:00.23, just shy of the world record of 4:57.

His secret, he said, is an ability to drink an entire beer within a single breath, a skill he's mastered by practising with empty beer bottles filled with water.

"It hurts like heck, and you feel almost oxygen-deprived, but you gotta do it," he laughed.

Gallagher had hoped to break the world record at the event, and said he plans to head back next year to defend his title and take another crack at the record.

Beer Mile rules

Beer Mile Championship rules say beers have to be a minimum of five per cent alcohol, but Gallagher prefers a six per cent beer while competing because it has less carbonation.

Winnipeg's Corey Gallagher is trailed closely by Australian Jack Colreavy at the Beer Mile World Championships in Texas, Wednesday. JOSH BAKER FOR FLOCASTS

Lukes challenges city officials over single-sourced contracts

Coun. Janice Lukes listens as the city's director of water and waste, Diane Sacher, not in photo, answers her questions on single-sourced contracts during Wednesday's executive policy committee. BERNICE PONTANILLA/METRO

The rookie councillor tasked with leading the city's infrastructure renewal and public works committee grilled a couple of senior officials over single-sourced contracts.

Coun. Janice Lukes asked Diane Sacher, the city's director of water and waste, during Wednesday's executive policy committee meeting, to justify the use of single-source contracting for the hiring of an engineering firm.

That firm will be paid up to $800,000 to study the Energy East Pipeline project that would see a pipeline in "very close proximity to critical City of Winnipeg assets including the Brady Road Resource Management Facility, Shoal Lake Water Supply Intake and Shoal Lake Aqueduct" converted to carry crude oil, a city report states.

Sacher said the single sourcing was necessary because of "a short window of time" and the fact that it's very specialized work.

"They also need to not be in conflict, they can't be engaged by Energy East as well, so we have to find some groups that have expertise and not be in conflict with Energy East, so it's a pretty narrow group of consultants," Sacher said, adding the request for proposals (RFP) process would take too many months.

Lukes later asked acting CAO Deepak Joshi why the water damage repairs to the Winnipeg police headquarters was also single sourced.

Colin Craig, Prairie director of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, said he didn't follow the single-sourced engineering contract closely, but in general "it's always best if the city can go to the tender process for large volume contracts."

BERNICE PONTANILLA/METRO

FLASH Boutique. Third pop-up shop downtown

Holiday shopping has become easier as another pop-up shop has opened downtown.

FLASH Boutique, located at 438 Graham Ave., sells made-in-Manitoba products normally only available online through shopping site Etsy — and it's also Winnipeg's third pop-up shop.

Several dignitaries, including minister Kevin Chief, Coun. Brian Mayes and CentreVenture CEO Ross McGowan joined project manager Katerina Pappas on Thursday to celebrate.

"If you look at the goods and services, these are not all Katerina's things that she's created," said Chief. "She's helping other entrepreneurs that have been selling stuff over the Internet. They now have the opportunity to get them showcased in a storefront property in our downtown where there are 100,000 people."

The shop is part of the CentreVenture Development Corp.'s Pop Up Shop Hop (PUSH) pilot project, which is designed to bring life to vacant storefronts and give local retailers a place to sell their products.

Manager Katerina Pappas helps Coun. Brian Mayes pick out a Christmas gift at FLASH Boutique, Winnipeg's third pop-up shop. ADRIANA MINGO/FOR METRO

McGowan said the project's goals are to activate vacant storefronts, provide low-risk opportunities to test the downtown marketplace for local retailers, convert short-term leases into long-term leases and provide more permanency in the downtown area.

According to its Facebook page, FLASH Boutique will remain open until Dec. 31.

ADRIANA MINGO/FOR METRO

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Boy held gun on abuser. Sex offender gets 3 years

A B.C. Supreme Court justice sentenced a Maple Ridge sex offender was sentenced to three years in prison, after he was held at gunpoint by a then-10-year-old who was sexually abused by the man.

Now in his 40s, the victim testified he was sexually abused in 1983 by Richard Elbertson Richardson while Richardson was babysitting him and his older brother.

The victim used Richardson's rifle and held him at gunpoint in his Maple Ridge house until the brothers' mother arrived, the court was told.

Richardson was convicted in May of sexually abusing the young boy and his older brother, who was 15 at the time.

In the intervening years, Richardson was convicted of sexual assaults in Port Coquitlam in 2005, 2009, and 2011.

Mitigating factors

The judge took into account the fact that Richardson had suffered a brain injury in a car accident when he was five years old. He was then placed in the Woodlands School in New Westminster, where Richardson was physically and sexually abused by staff and other "inmates."

The court was told that the two brothers suffered in shame for years but the younger brother contacted police a few years ago after seeing a police notice about Richardson.

B.C. Supreme Court Justice Bruce Greyell sentenced Richardson to three years in prison for his sex crimes involving the brothers.

NEAL HALL/FOR METRO IN VANCOUVER

B.C. poultry farms under quarantine

A poultry farm under quarantine because of a outbreak of avian influenza is pictured in Chilliwack, B.C., on Thursday. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency now says that there are now four farms in the Fraser Valley under quarantine due to this outbreak. Dr. Harpreet Kochhar, Canada's chief veterinary officer, said federal and provincial government agencies will be looking for any sign the virus has moved beyond those four farms. Kochhar said it's still not clear how the birds at the first two farms were infected. The agency focused on the additional farms because they had each received birds from the Chilliwack chicken operation. All of the birds at the four infected farms that are still alive will be euthanized.

PHOTO: JONATHAN HAYWARD/ THE CANADIAN PRESS

TEXT: THE CANADIAN PRESS

Workplace. Three in 10 Canadians are sexually harassed at work: Poll

Three in 10 Canadians say they have been on the receiving end of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, or sexually charged talk while on the job or at an office function — but the vast majority prefer to deal with it on their own rather than report it to an employer, says a new Angus Reid poll.

And for approximately one million workers (mostly women) in Canada, the experiences are recent — within the last 24 months — despite the current climate of heightened awareness amid the explosive, ongoing allegations against former CBC radio host Jian Ghomeshi and TV legend Bill Cosby, the survey found.

Fourteen per cent of those harassed also told the Angus Reid Institute that the experience was much more intense than innuendo or talk, ranging from sexual touching to more serious unwanted sexual contact over their working lives.

While both genders of employees say they have experienced sexual harassment, "women are — unsurprisingly — four times as likely to have been harassed as men," says the study, released Friday.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

'60s scoop

Lawyer, plaintiffs ask government to acknowledge loss of cultural identity

The federal government needs to admit thousands of aboriginal children were robbed of their identities during the so-called '60s scoop, and stop fighting against a class action suit seeking damages, the lead plaintiff and her lawyer said Thursday. Their comments follow a Divisional Court ruling dismissing Ottawa's attempt to have the $1.3-billion class action thrown out. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Effort against ISIL

No civilian deaths in Canadian airstrikes: Military

The Canadian military is confident that no civilians have been killed to date as a result of its airstrikes against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), a spokesman said Thursday. That assurance came as the country's joint operations command revealed details of two additional bombing missions on Nov. 28 and Nov. 30. Canada has 69 special forces troops advising Kurdish fighters in northern Iraq. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bill S-7 under fire

Zero Tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices Act. Bill seeks to keep polygamists out of the country and prevent forced marriages

Title an issue

"In that title, if you wanted 'barbaric cultural practices' — which probably wasn't going to be my choice — but if you wanted that, I wished you had added something like 'violence' in there."

Conservative Sen. Raynell Andreychuk, talks about the title of Bill S-7.

The need for — and even the name of — a new Conservative bill aimed at barring polygamous and forced marriages came under fire Thursday in the Senate.

Bill S-7, entitled the "Zero Tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices Act," amends immigration and criminal laws with the aim of keeping polygamists out of Canada and preventing women and girls from being married against their will.

"We wish we could say in the Canada of 2014 that these were no longer challenges for us domestically," Immigration Minister Chris Alexander told the Senate human rights committee.

"But as we know from communities across the country and from the daily fact of violence against women, there remain challenges and we remain duty-bound to act against them."

Conservative Sen. Raynell Andreychuk raised concerns, however, that the government's stated goal of combating violence risks being overshadowed by the bill's dramatic title.

However, Alexander defended the name. The fact it has already generated debate means it's already doing its job, he argued.

"What is a barbaric practice? It is a practice that is unacceptable; it is a practice that involves violence that is in many respects indiscriminate, gratuitously meted out, behind closed doors, where women and girls are defenceless, whereby whole families conspire to ensure underage women lie about their age, take part in a forced marriage," he said.

Andreychuk later said if the government does believe violence against women is addressed by the title of the bill, she is satisfied with it.

The new law would deny entry to Canada to those seeking to practise polygamy, which is illegal in this country.

It would also require "free and enlightened consent to marriage" and sets a federal minimum age for marriage at 16; a threshold that wasn't already enshrined in law.

It also makes it an offence for anyone younger than that to be taken out of Canada to be married elsewhere.

That's a direct reference to the polygamous community of Bountiful, B.C., where it's long been believed that teenage girls are shuttled back and forth to the U.S. for marriage.

Four members of that community are currently facing charges in relation to that practice under existing Canadian laws, but past attempts to obtain a polygamy conviction in Bountiful have failed.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Harper in no rush to fill vacant Senate seats

Prime Minister Stephen Harper

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Prime Minister Stephen Harper says he's in no hurry to fill vacancies in the Senate.

Harper said he's not hearing much popular support for naming new members to the upper chamber, where 16 of the 105 seats remain empty — and the Conservatives still hold a healthy majority.

"I don't think I'm getting a lot of calls from Canadians to name more senators right about now," Harper said Thursday.

Harper's enthusiasm for the Senate — more specifically, reforming or abolishing it — was also fettered in April when the Supreme Court of Canada made it clear that Senate reform would require substantial provincial blessing.

His latest comments were prompted by concerns raised by newly appointed Senate Speaker Pierre Claude Nolin, who said he believes the shortage of senators is affecting the chamber's productivity.

"Is it affecting the proper functioning of the institution? Yes, I think it is," said Nolin.

From the government's standpoint, the sole purpose of the Senate is to pass legislation — a role Harper said it's able to carry out just fine.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Animal-rights activists hope to put this stark message on a Hamilton billboard after a devout Christian woman admitted to keeping her husband's corpse for months while waiting for his resurrection. CONTRIBUTED

PETA has a 'rotten' idea

Extreme messaging. Billboard planned for Hamilton area compares dead man's corpse to animal meat

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
Metro in Toronto

Animal-rights activists with PETA are hoping to plaster a stark message on a Hamilton billboard, days after a devout Christian woman admitted to keeping her husband's corpse in a bedroom for months, waiting for his resurrection.

"We hope that anyone, if they've been shocked by the decision to keep a body in their home, will stop and consider what they are keeping in their own kitchens and refrigerator," PETA spokesman Dan Carron said.

"We're hoping that the billboard is going to help make something good come out of a very sad story."

That's unlikely, said York University marketing professor Alan Middleton. Middleton said extreme messaging is a hallmark of PETA advertising and often only mobilizes the group's hardcore supporters.

In 2003, PETA ran an ad campaign comparing the treatment of Jews in the Holocaust to the treatment of animals on factory farms.

Meanwhile, PETA said it's in "negotiations" with five companies to run the new ad.

Benefit

"We're hoping that the billboard is going to ... make something good come out of a very sad story." PETA spokesman Dan Carron

Four of those companies, however, either don't have billboards in the Hamilton area or didn't know about the request when contacted by Metro.

Randy Otto, president of Pattison Outdoor, one of the companies PETA said it has contacted, was unaware of the proposal. He wouldn't comment on whether his company would run that kind of ad but said Pattison is a member of Ad Standards Canada and abides by their rules.

Ad Standards Canada administers a national advertising code of conduct, which in part prohibits ads that undermine human dignity.

Earlier this week, Hamilton's Kaling Wald pleaded guilty to a charge of failing to notify police that her husband's corpse was in their home.

Peter Wald had diabetes and died about six months ago after his left foot became infected. He had refused to go to hospital, believing instead that God would cure him, according to court records.

"His wife is a devout Christian and her faith tainted and warped her better judgment," assistant Crown attorney Janet Booy said this week.

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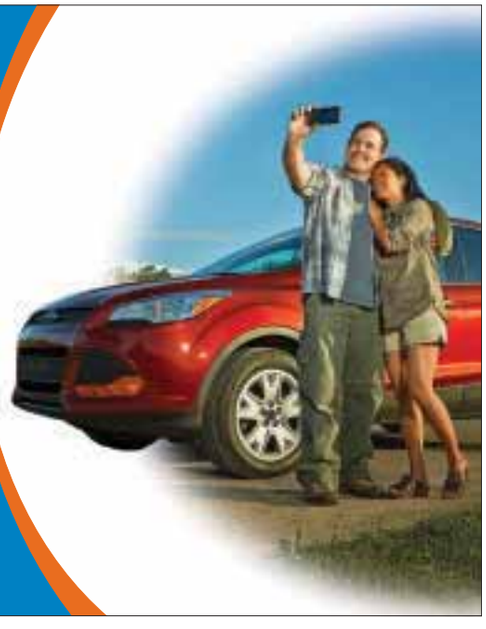

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Serial killings. Most recommendations from Pickton inquiry have been enacted, B.C. says

British Columbia's government says it has taken action on 75 per cent of the recommendations made two years ago after a public inquiry into the Robert Pickton serial killings.

Attorney General Suzanne Anton says the actions are helping vulnerable women and include expanding cellphone service along the so-called Highway of Tears, a remote stretch of northern highway where women and girls have disappeared.

Anton says the government has also passed legislation that helps police find missing people and some of the children of missing and murdered women have received $50,000 compensation payments.

Pickton was convicted in 2007 of the second-degree murders of six women and was sentenced to life in prison, although he admitted to killing 49 women and the DNA or remains of 33 were found on his farm.

A commission of inquiry into the Pickton case made 63 recommendations in December 2012, including funding a 24-hour centre in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside for sex workers and starting a transportation service along the Highway of Tears.

Anton says the government continues to work on improving transportation options along that stretch of highway. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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25 years after massacre

Students walk through Parkdale Collegiate Institute in Toronto during a vigil Thursday holding a photo of one of 14 women killed in the mass shooting at École Polytechnique in Montreal on Dec. 6, 1989.
DAVID COOPER/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Labour vows pension fight

New Quebec law. Bill provides for 50-50 split between workers, municipalities on pension contributions

Quebec's largest labour group has promised to mount a legal challenge against pension legislation that breezed through the national assembly Thursday.

Bill 3 provides for a 50-50 split between municipalities and unionized workers on pension contributions and deficits.

Amendments sought by the Parti Quebecois and agreed to by the Liberals open the door to workers paying between 45 and 50 per cent, with municipalities paying between 50 and 55 per cent.

If the two sides can't reach an agreement, the 50-50 scenario will apply.

The government says the legislation was necessary to help municipalities grappling with pension deficits that, across the province, could total as much as $3.9 billion.

The Quebec Federation of Labour said it is considering a legal fight, arguing the law is unconstitutional.

The secretary-general of the labour group called the law's passing "a day of mourning" for the municipal world.

"Not only has the Liberal government of Philippe Couillard remained insensitive to the demands of workers and retirees in the municipal sector, but he also refuses to make public the status of pension deficits, as if he wanted to hide the truth from the people,'' Serge Cadieux said in a statement.

Cadieux said the actual municipal pension deficits are half of what they were in 2012.

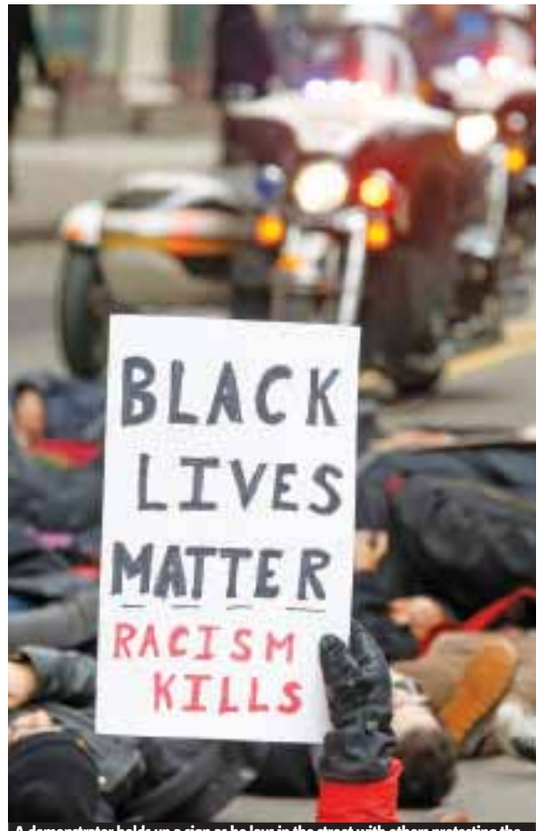
Municipal Affairs Minister Pierre Moreau called on unions to put their energy into negotiating.

"We are comfortable with the idea that this bill meets all the requirements to successfully withstand any court challenges.''

Bill 3 triggered widespread protests among municipal workers over several months.

"We have a cause that's deeply just and we'll go on right to the end,'' said Marc Ranger, a spokesman for the main coalition fighting the legislation.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Civil rights leaders decry decision in chokehold case



A demonstrator holds up a sign as he lays in the street with others protesting the deaths of two unarmed black men at the hands of white police officers during a march through Pittsburgh on Thursday. KEITH SRAKOCIC/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Death of Eric Garner. Second non-indictment of a police officer in as many weeks prompts civil rights groups to march on Washington

Civil rights leaders Thursday decried the grand jury decision not to charge a white police officer in the chokehold death of a black man and announced plans for a march and a summit on racial justice in Washington later this month.

National Urban League President Marc Morial said the lack of an indictment in the death of Eric Garner was "a travesty of justice."

The decision Wednesday not to bring charges against Officer Daniel Pantaleo triggered protests around the country and sent thousands into New York's streets, where they marched, chanted and blocked traffic. Police said 83 people were arrested, mostly on disorderly conduct charges.

Pataleo's lawyer and police union officials argued that the grand jury got it right, saying that the officer used an authorized takedown move — not a banned chokehold — against a man who was resisting arrest. And they said Garner's poor health was the main cause of his death.

About 20 civil rights leaders met behind closed doors Thursday at the Rev. Al Sharpton's National Action Network headquarters. Sharpton said a civil rights summit will be held following a Dec. 13 march in Washington. He said the topics will include education and boycotts.

The Garner case — combined with the decision by a grand jury last week not to charge the white officer who shot and killed unarmed black 18-year-old Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo. — stirred a national conversation about race, police training and the grand jury process.

Garner, 43, died after a scuffle broke out July 17 as officers tried to arrest him for selling untaxed cigarettes on the street. The medical examiner ruled that Pantaleo's chokehold on Garner contributed to his death.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hilary Clinton weighs in

Hillary Rodham Clinton said Thursday the U.S. criminal justice system is "out of balance" and she supports federal reviews of the police-involved deaths of unarmed black men in Ferguson, Mo., and New York City.

Chechnya. Capital city attacked by Islamic militants

Police waged hours-long gunbattles with Islamic militants who attacked Chechnya's capital Thursday, leaving at least 20 people dead and underscoring Russia's vulnerability just as President Vladimir Putin used patriotic and religious imagery in his state-of-the-nation address to defend his standoff with the West.

The clashes in Grozny, the city's biggest in years, dented a carefully nurtured image of stability created by Chechnya's Kremlin-backed strongman after two separatist conflicts. The new violence raised fears of more attacks in Chechnya and widening unrest in the rest of Russia's volatile North Caucasus region.

The Kavkaz Centre website, a mouthpiece for Islamic militant groups operating in the North Caucasus, carried a link to a video by an individual claiming responsibility for the attack. The man in the video said he was operating on orders from Emir Khamzat, reportedly a nom de guerre of Chechen warlord Aslan Byutukayev. The claim could not immediately be verified. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Details

The insurgents in Chechnya and other Caucasus regions want to create an independent state governed by their strict interpretation of Islamic law.

Yemen. Branch of al-Qaida threatens U.S. over hostage

Al-Qaida's in Yemen released a video Thursday, after an American hostage was the target of a rescue attempt by U.S. special forces last month, warning Washington not to try again, and giving it three days to meet unspecified demands.

"My life is in danger," photojournalist Luke Somers says in the footage, which appeared to mimic hostage videos released by al-Qaida's rival, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

It was the first word from the 33-year-old since he was snatched from the streets of Sanaa more than a year ago.

A statement by Pentagon press secretary Rear Admiral John Kirby acknowledged for the first time Thursday that a raid last month had sought to rescue Somers but that he turned out not to be at the site.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hong Kong

Pro-democracy protesters consider leaving protest sites

Members of the Hong Kong Federation of Students said Thursday that they're mulling whether to stay or go, with spokeswoman Yvonne Leung telling a local radio station that the group hopes to come to a decision within the next week.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Russia

Putin addresses potential recession

In his state-of-the-nation address, Putin announced measures to spur the country's flagging economy, proposing a three-year freeze on tax inspections for companies as well as a tax amnesty for money brought back to Russia from abroad.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ukraine

Rebel commander admits rockets launched from residential areas

A separatist commander in eastern Ukraine admitted Thursday that rebels have mounted rocket attacks against government troops from residential areas but says the practice is being halted. A video surfaced online showing rebels firing from a rocket launcher next to several apartment buildings. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

West Africa

Mali receives mobile Ebola lab

Mali has received its first mobile Ebola lab, which can be deployed to remote hot spots if needed. Mali has recorded eight cases of Ebola, but shares a border with Guinea.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Eutawville. Ex-cop who killed unarmed black man charged

A white man who was the police chief in a small South Carolina town was charged with murder Wednesday in the shooting death of an unarmed black man nearly four years ago.

Richard Combs worked in Eutawville — population 300 and one-third of that black — when Bernard Bailey came to Town Hall to argue about his daughter's broken-taillight ticket in May 2011. Combs tried to arrest Bailey on an obstruction of justice charge, prosecutors said. Bailey marched back outside to his truck, and Combs tried to get inside. The two briefly fought, and then the police chief shot Bailey, 54, twice in the chest in his pickup.

Combs said at an earlier hearing that he was tangled in Bailey's steering wheel as he tried to shut off the ignition and feared for his life if Bailey drove away.

But prosecutors said Combs was the aggressor, following Bailey as he tried to get away.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Details

State investigators began reviewing the shooting in March 2013 after a U.S. Justice Department investigation determined Combs did not violate Bailey's civil rights. In August 2013, state prosecutors charged Combs with misconduct in office, which carries a maximum of 10 years in prison.

- The indictment issued Wednesday gives no indication of why the state decided to seek a murder charge, which would carry 30 years to life in prison if Combs is convicted.

Underage abuse. Bill Cosby seeks dismissal of lawsuit

A woman suing Bill Cosby for sexual battery attempted to sell a story about the comedian to a tabloid a decade ago and tried to extort money in exchange for her silence, Cosby's attorney said in a court filing Thursday.

Attorney Martin Singer wrote in the filing that the lawsuit by Judy Huth and her attorney followed a failed attempt to extort $250,000 from Cosby. In the filing, Cosby seeks monetary damages from Huth and her attorney.

The filing comes two days after Huth sued, claiming the comedian forced her to perform a sex act in 1974 when she was 15. The incident occurred in a bedroom of the Playboy Mansion after Cosby gave Huth and a 16-year-old friend alcohol, according to her lawsuit.

Her lawsuit stated she only recently discovered that she had suffered psychological damage as a result of the incident, which under California law allows the filing of the case.

Bill Cosby. EVAN VUCCI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The filings state that Singer and Huth's attorney, Marc S. Strecker, had several conversations about the allegations in the weeks before the lawsuit was filed. Strecker first demanded $100,000, then raised the demand to $250,000 in order to keep from filing a lawsuit on Huth's behalf, Singer wrote.

In recent weeks, more than a dozen women have alleged that Cosby drugged them and sexually assaulted them.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Poland

Toddler recovering in kids' hospital

A Polish toddler found unconscious in sub-freezing temperatures hugged a teddy bear and called for his parents after only four days of treatment.

Adam, 2, spent an unknown number of hours outdoors in southern Poland after going missing from his grandmother's house in southern Poland.

His body temperature was only 12.7 C and his heart was beating extremely slowly when hospital treatment began early Sunday.

Dr. Janusz Skalski, a heart surgeon at the hospital, said Adam's quick recovery surprised everyone, but said he will still need rehabilitation therapy to help restore his full physical and mental abilities.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Florida

School accused of promoting deceit

Prosecutors say a for-profit Florida college used exotic dancers as admissions officers, falsified documents and coached students to lie on financial forms as it fraudulently obtained millions of dollars in federal money.

The Florida Attorney General and the U.S. Attorney in Miami announced Wednesday they were joining a civil lawsuit against FastTrain College and former owner Alejandro Amor, 56, who ran seven Florida campuses.

The complaint says FastTrain and Amor bilked the U.S. Department of Education for millions of dollars with falsified grant applications. The complaint says strippers on at least one campus tried to draw young male students.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Chimp denied human rights

Animal rights. Appeals court affirms that chimpanzees do not deserve basic rights such as freedom from imprisonment

A chimpanzee is not entitled to the rights of a human and does not have to be freed by its owner, a New York appeals court ruled Thursday.

The three-judge Appellate Division panel was unanimous in denying legal personhood to Tommy, who lives alone in a cage.

A trial-level court had previously denied the Nonhuman Rights Project's effort to have Tommy released. The group's lawyer, Steven Wise, told the appeals court in October that the chimp's living conditions are akin to a person in unlawful solitary confinement.

Wise argued that animals with human qualities, such as chimps, deserve basic rights, including freedom from imprisonment. He has also sought the release of three other chimps in New York and said he plans similar cases in other states.

But the mid-level appeals court said there is no precedent for treating animals as persons and no legal basis.

"So far as legal theory is concerned, a person is any being whom the law regards as capable of rights and duties," the judges wrote. "Needless to say, unlike human beings, chimpanzees cannot bear any legal duties, submit to societal responsibilities or be held legally accountable for their actions."

That, they ruled, makes it "inappropriate" to grant the rights of a human to the animal.

The Nonhuman Rights Project said it will appeal to the state's top court, citing other New York appeals-court rulings it says are at odds with Thursday's decision.

Tommy's owner, Patrick Lavery, said Thursday he was pleased and expected the ruling.

Tommy, believed to be about 40 years old, is a former entertainment chimp who was placed with Lavery about 10 years ago. Lavery said Tommy is cared for under strict state and federal licence rules.

The court noted there have been no claims that Tommy has been mistreated or any of those rules have been violated.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"Needless to say, unlike human beings, chimpanzees cannot bear any legal duties, submit to societal responsibilities or be held legally accountable for their actions."

From the decision, written by a three-judge appeal-court panel

Prisoners honour Mandela

Ahead of the first anniversary of Nelson Mandela's death, inmates at the Zonderwater prison east of Pretoria, South Africa, have been making brightly coloured blankets to commemorate the anti-apartheid leader who became the country's first black president. The prisoners have crocheted the blankets as part of a charity project for poor communities. THEMBA HADEBE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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San Jose police dismantle homeless encampments

Yolanda Gutierrez, a two-year resident of a homeless encampment known as the Jungle, holds a sign in protest in San Jose, Calif., on Thursday. Police and social workers on Thursday began clearing away one of the nation's largest homeless encampments, a cluster of flimsy tents and plywood shelters that once housed more than 200 people in the heart of California's wealthy Silicon Valley. MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Jungle. Despite a Monday notice stating they had to leave by Thursday, about 60 people were left yesterday morning

Police and social workers on Thursday began clearing away one of the largest U.S. homeless encampments, a cluster of flimsy tents and plywood shelters that once housed more than 200 people in the heart of California's wealthy Silicon Valley.

Authorities have been trying for years to resolve problems at the camp known as the Jungle, including violence and unsanitary conditions.

On Monday, people living in the camp were given until Thursday to leave or face arrest for trespassing. By Thursday morning, about 60 people were left at the garbage-strewn site.

Nancy Ortega sobbed as she watched tractors load garbage into trash trucks.

Then a passing motorist shouted at those who had just been evicted.

"People drive by and look at us like we're circus animals," she said.

A few dozen protesters gathered at the site holding signs reading "Homeless people matter" and "Stand with The Jungle." No arrests were reported.

With the camp cleared, officials planned to try to find shelter for the night for people connected with social services, although anyone not linked to a program still had to leave. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"People drive by and look at us like we're circus animals."

Nancy Ortega, resident of the homeless encampment known as the Jungle

Montana shooting

Man's adrenalin was high when student was shot: Attorneys

A Montana man's attorneys said in court Thursday his adrenalin was sky-high and was defending his home when he fired a shotgun four times into his garage in April, killing a 17-year-old German exchange student.

In opening statements at Markus Kaarma's murder trial, Montana prosecutors argued Kaarma was the aggressor and he lured Diren Dede into his garage by leaving the door partially open and a purse inside.

The trial has become another test of "stand your ground" laws in the U.S. The laws make it easier for people to avoid prosecution in a shooting by saying they felt imminent danger. Dede, from the German city of Hamburg, was not carrying a weapon.

The German government is closely following the case and condemned the shooting as disproportionate to any risk posed to Dede. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wind gusts, valve issues delay NASA Orion launch

NASA's Orion spacecraft, atop a United Launch Alliance Delta 4-Heavy rocket, sits on the launch pad before its first unmanned orbital test flight from the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station on Thursday. CHRIS O'MEARA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wind gusts and sluggish fuel valves conspired to keep NASA's new Orion spacecraft on the launch pad Thursday, delaying a crucial test flight meant to revitalize human exploration.

NASA aimed for another shot Friday morning as tens of thousands of disappointed and weary launch guests hustled out. The weather report was iffy — forecasters expected higher winds, clouds and rain — but managers were optimistic the wind direction would shift in their favour.

United Launch Alliance's Dan Collins, who's in charge of the unmanned Delta IV rocket, said he was confident the valve trouble, seen before on a previous mission, could be quickly overcome.

"The team was absolutely on their game, listening to everything the rocket was telling us, and it ultimately told us it wasn't ready to go today," Collins told reporters. "And so we'll go make sure we've got a happy rocket ... and send Orion off to a very, very successful test flight."

Orion is how NASA hopes to send astronauts on round trips to Mars in the decades ahead. This inaugural flight, while just 4-1/2 hours, will send the unmanned capsule 3,600 miles into space.

It's the first attempt to send a spacecraft capable of carrying humans beyond a couple hundred miles of Earth since the Apollo moon program.

NASA's new countdown clock made its debut, although excessive wind and a cargo ship resting inside the site's danger zone delayed launch. One of the first-stage rocket boosters had valve trouble.

Altogether an estimated 27,000 guests gathered for the historic send-off — roads leading into Kennedy Space Center were packed well before dawn. Astronauts in attendance included Anna Fischer, one of NASA's original spacewomen, and now assigned to the Orion program. She too was disappointed by the delay, but said "It's way more important to have a successful flight."

"It was so much fun to come out here and have that same atmosphere as before a shuttle launch," Fisher said. "We really miss that. That's why we're here. This is what we love." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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A study, published in the Internal Journal of Medical Science, conducted a double-blind, placebo-controlled study, in which 60 slightly overweight people were given either placebo or White Kidney Bean extract, once daily. This single daily dose was given 30 minutes prior to a large meal rich in carbohydrates. Over the 30 days of the study, subjects receiving White Kidney Bean extract had significantly greater reduction of body weight, BMI, fat mass, adipose tissue thickness, and waist/hip/ thigh circumferences while maintaining lean body mass compared to subjects receiving placebo.

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Filipino villagers flee as typhoon nears region devastated last year

Typhoon Hagupit. Might make landfall in Eastern Samar province on Saturday

Villagers in the central Philippines fled coastal homes and triggered panic-buying in grocery stores and gas stations as a fast-approaching powerful storm brought back nightmares of last year's deadly onslaught by Typhoon Haiyan.

Typhoon Hagupit — Filipino for "smash" — was packing sustained winds of 205 kilometres per hour and gusts of up to 240 km/h over the Pacific, about 700 kilometres off the country's eastern coast. Forecasts show it may hit Eastern Samar province on Saturday and barrel inland along the same route where Haiyan levelled villages and left more than 7,300 dead and missing in November last year.

Residents of Leyte province, Philippines, evacuate to safer ground on Thursday. PAUL CINCO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Haiyan survivor Emily Sagales said many of her stilledgy neighbours in central Tacloban city, which was ravaged by Haiyan, packed their clothes and fled to a sports stadium and the safer homes of relatives. Long lines formed at grocery stores and gas stations as residents stocked up on basic goods, she said.

"The trauma has returned," the 23-year-old Sagales said. In the wake of last year's typhoon — which killed her mother-in-law and washed away her home — she gave birth to her first child, a girl, in a crowded makeshift clinic filled with the injured and dying near the Tacloban airport.

"It's worse now because I didn't have a baby to worry about last year," she said.

"The sun is still shining, but people are obviously scared. Almost all of our rooms have been booked," said Roan Florendo of the Leyte Park hotel, near San Pedro Bay in Tacloban. The military was put on alert, evacuation centres were opened and food, medicine and body bags were sent out.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Second time around?

Haiyan demolished about a million houses and displaced about four million people in the central Philippines. Hundreds of residents still living in tents in Tacloban have been prioritized in an ongoing evacuation.

- Hotels in Tacloban, a city of more than 200,000 people still struggling to recover from last year's massive damage, were running out of rooms as wealthier families booked ahead for the weekend.
- Cabinet secretary Mario Montejo said Thursday it was almost certain the typhoon would slam into the eastern coast.

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Dollarama. Discount store facing rising costs

Dollarama is facing rising costs, including higher minimum wages, new duties on imports and the inflationary impact of a lower Canadian dollar.

"We're hearing about even price increases on incoming inbound freight from the Orient," CEO Larry Rossy said Thursday during a conference call to discuss third-quarter results.

The Montreal-based retailer said labour costs are rising as five provinces have increased minimum wages by an average of 2.5 per cent and a lower loonie is driving the cost of imports that fill its store shelves higher.

Costs are also expected to rise when tariffs increase on many imported products from China and other countries starting in January.

Dollarama said it plans to offset the higher costs by improving its efficiency rather than cutting jobs.

"You have to appreciate that the dollar store business is a labour-intensive business," Rossy told analysts.

Despite the challenges, the discount retailer beat expectations as its profits surged on improved same-store sales. It earned $73 million for the three months ended Nov. 2. That compared to $61.7 million a year earlier.

Dollarama opened 11 net new stores in this quarter, mainly in Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta. It remains on track to open 75 to 80 net new stores in its financial year.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Lawsuit over toilet breaks

Work. Woman alleges pregnancy and gender discrimination after being told she was taking too many bathroom breaks

An Oregon woman is suing her former high-tech employer for more than $400,000 US, contending she was fired while pregnant with her second child after being told she took too many restroom breaks.

The suit filed in circuit court says Dawn Steckmann and other employees were never told they needed to clock out before using the restroom at Maxim Integrated Products, The Oregonian reported. The company makes wafers for wireless devices at its plant in the Portland suburb of Beaverton.

Maxim lawyer Melissa Healy declined comment, citing the pending litigation.

The lawsuit alleges pregnancy and gender discrimination.

It says when Steckmann was pregnant with her first child in 2011, she asked a supervisor whether she should go off the clock because she was urinating more frequently, and was told that wasn't necessary.

During her second pregnancy in 2013, restroom visits were more frequent because of a bladder condition caused by her first pregnancy, and "she would not even have had time to clock out to use the restroom without an accident," the suit says.

In June 2013, Steckmann was called to a meeting with her supervisor and a human resources manager who asked why she was not clocking out for restroom breaks. Her supervisor claimed he had told Steckmann she needed to clock out. The human resources manager told Steckmann that for all he knew, she could be watching movies in the bathroom, according to the lawsuit.

Steckmann is seeking compensation for lost wages and benefits, damage to her reputation and emotional distress.

She also asks to be reinstated in her job as a fabrication technician making $18.76 US an hour.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

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OIL $66.81 US (-$0.57)

GOLD $1,207.70 US (-$1.00)

Natural gas: $3.66 US (-$0.15)
Dow Jones: 17,900.10 (-12.52)

Alix Box, President and CEO of Second Cup, sits at the "slow bar" at a redesigned Second Cup coffee outlet in Toronto on Thursday. CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Second Cup. Chain perks up format with 'slow bar'

The Second Cup Ltd. has unveiled a new-format store that includes a redesigned circular "slow bar" where patrons can plug in their personal electronics while they sit and watch servers work an array of high-end brewing machines.

The new store at King and John Streets — in Toronto's theatre district — is part of the specialty coffee chain's attempt to inject new life into a Canadian brand that has languished in recent years.

Among other things, the new-look Second Cup café has a Steampunk coffee and tea brewing system that the company describes as "true theatre in motion."

It has also collaborated with Canadian artists to design special paper cups: Optimism by Matt Andres of British Columbia, Creativity from Adrian Forrow of Ontario, and Collaboration by Zela Lobb from Quebec.

The Mississauga, Ont.-based franchise company has been working for months to recover its position in the Canadian market, hiring Alix Box — who has held senior positions at Holt Renfrew and Starbucks — as its chief executive in February.

Second Cup has been faced with increased competition in recent years from both high-end coffee retailers such as Starbucks and major restaurant chains like Tim Hortons and McDonald's. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Giant backlog

L.L. Bean duck boot too popular

Demand for L.L. Bean boots is surging — so much so that some customers will have to wait until February to get their holiday purchases.

A backlog of 60,000 boot orders could grow to 100,000 by month's end, and the company is in the process of hiring 100 workers and purchasing additional equipment to catch up with demand.

The rubber-bottomed, leather-topped "duck boot" has seen sales grow from fewer than 100,000 a decade ago to about 450,000 this year. Next year, the number is expected to top 500,000. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Diapers, baby wipes

Amazon launching line of baby gear

Amazon is launching its own line of diapers and baby wipes exclusively for its Prime members in the U.S. to get more shoppers to sign up for the $99 US annual program.

The new line, Amazon Elements, will mean tougher competition for traditional consumer product companies, said a Bernstein Research analyst. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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VOICES

CLOSE THE ENVELOPE ON OPEN LETTERS, PLEASE

THE KOHLER REPORT
By Rebecca Kohler

I'd write an open letter to open letters if I could stomach writing an open letter. I find it difficult to read one without cringing at least once.

I can't quite put my finger on why, but I guess it's that they're publicly private in a way that makes me uncomfortable; like a drunk wife berating her husband for his lack of table manners in front of dinner guests (think Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?). It's not that I have a problem with people publicly voicing their opinions (clearly, I write a column that appears on a page of the paper called "Voices"), it's that I wonder why you would feel the need to make it personal.

We've seen a rash of open letters this year — Sinead O'Connor to Miley Cyrus, Jian Ghomeshi's TMI opus to the world — and this week that rash looked like it needed some ointment.

Last week we had that (really dumb) one from Republican Party communications director Elizabeth Lauten to the Obama girls. In it, Lauten admonished Sasha and Malia for not having enough "class" while attending the Turkey Pardoning. First of all, give those kids a break — I'm sure they'd rather be hanging out with friends than their dad and an undercooked piece of poultry. Second, Ms. Lauten, how "classy" is it for a GOP staffer to attack the First Children on her Facebook page? I guess it's classy enough to warrant your resignation.

We also saw an O.L. from model Arisce Wanzer to Kendall Jenner. The bitter tirade scolds Jenner for not having had to work as hard as other models to find success.

"Take a moment and remove yourself from your current situation ... to a life that isn't riddled with excess and only hearing the word 'yes'," Wanzer writes.

I get it, yes: People with golden horseshoes up their genetically superior rear ends are irritating, and I'm always in the mood for a good Kardashian bashing. But this isn't Kendall Jenner's fault, it's the modelling industry's. They're the ones that gave Jenner the work. Aside from this letter revealing that you're insecure and sour (let's face it, you're probably really hungry), you've also aimed your letter at the wrong target. Besides, Kendall is so rich, she probably can't even read.

Leave them alone

Ms. Lauten, how "classy" is it for a GOP staffer to attack the First Children on her Facebook page?

On Wednesday, the National Post printed an open letter from Canadian musician Dave Bidini to Joni Mitchell. In it, he references a recent Maclean's article in which Mitchell said a lot of uncomplimentary things about her fans, and a few too many complimentary things about herself. It's true, she sounded like a cow with a sore udder. Though I agreed with Bidini, I was still getting that uncomfortable open-letter feeling.

But then I thought, "Maybe this was the only appropriate format." How else would Bidini pitch that to the National Post? "I want to write an article about how Joni Mitchell is a piece of poo."? So maybe sometimes open letters are necessary?

That said, I'm still firm on my original stance. I find open letters masturbatory — they're basically talking to themselves — condescending, and self-aggrandizing.

So, here's an open "note" to open letter writers: If you don't know someone well enough to have their mailing address, chances are, they don't know you well enough to care what you think.

Rebecca Kohler is a stand-up comic, writer, actor, gymnast, lawyer and chemist. (Some of this isn't true.) Follow her on Twitter at @becca_kohler

Happy face/Sad face

From reissued birth notices to whack decrees by dictators, Metro weighs in on the news that made headlines this week:

GIRL SCOUT COOKIES

Ever see adorable Girl Guides selling cookies and panic when you realize you don't have cash? If you live in the U.S., that panic's a thing of the past. The American equivalent, Girl Scout cookies, are going online for the first time ever. Sadly, Canadian guides aren't following suit, but that doesn't mean we can't be happy for our friends south of the border.

ABSURD EDICTS

In crazy dictator news, North Korea has made it illegal to go by Kim Jong-Un — the name of the country's young and eccentric leader. And in China, puns have been banned in an effort to stifle government dissent — or as the government would say, prevent "cultural and linguistic chaos."

GOOD SAMARITAN POLICE IN TENNESSEE

When a Salvation Army shelter in Tennessee turned away a family of five because it said their teen son was too old for the family wing and too young for the men's wing, they faced a frigid night in their car. That's when the local police stepped in. Officers pooled their cash and took them to a hotel for the night. When the hotel clerk insisted on comping the family their room, officers used the cash to buy the family groceries.

METRO PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

FAKE PREGNANCY HEIST

A couple is accused of using a fake pregnancy belly to hide items they stole from an electronics store north of Toronto. The alleged act was caught on camera. Shame for co-opting the miracle of life for greed. But points for creativity, we guess.

PARENTS OF TRANSGENDER TEEN

An Australian couple is getting high-fives from around the world after re-issuing a tear-jerking birth notice for their transgender teen: "In 1995 we announced the arrival of our sprogget, Elizabeth Anne, as a daughter. He informs us that we were mistaken. Oops! Our bad. We would now like to present, our wonderful son — Kai Bogert. Loving you is the easiest thing in the world. Tidy your room." *sniff*

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Onscreen sizzle a real-life fizzle

Casting. Despite strong sparks in their film pairings, Jennifer Lawrence and Bradley Cooper insist there is no romance off-screen, just like many popular movie couples

Jennifer Lawrence and Bradley Cooper play married lumber barons in Serena. CONTRIBUTED

Bradley Cooper and Jennifer Lawrence first paired off in Silver Linings Playbook — he was a divorced substitute teacher, jailed for beating his wife's boyfriend half to death; she was a troubled widow who needed his help to win a dance competition — and sparks flew.

Next they shared scenes, but no romance, in American Hustle. And, this weekend, they make it a trifecta with the release of Serena.

Based on the novel by Ron Rash, Cooper and Lawrence play husband and wife lumber barons whose marriage becomes strained after she suffers a miscarriage.

Despite having shared love scenes in movies, Cooper says they have kept the romance onscreen.

"I mean, first of all, I could be her father," he says.

The re-teaming of Cooper and Lawrence in Serena proves that lightning does not always strike thrice.

The "it" couple had chemistry to burn in their previous pairings but fail to set off sparks here. As George and Serena they are ruthless and selfish, which should be the stuff of interesting characters, but the story throws so many hurdles their way that eventually it becomes one big, boring blur.

Some onscreen couples, however, have managed to keep the flame alive through several films.

After a 16-year separation, Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan — the pre-eminent cinema sweethearts of the 1990s — will reunite in the World War II drama Ithaca.

The three rom coms that made them superstars, Joe Versus the Volcano, Sleepless in Seattle and You've Got Mail, were fuelled by the platonic chemistry they share in real life.

"He makes me feel less alone," says Ryan.

Kate Winslet and co-star Leonardo DiCaprio are so close in real life that her children refer to him as Uncle Leo.

As Titanic's star-crossed lovers Jack and Rose, they defined romantic tragedy for a whole generation before recoupling 11 years later in the feel-bad love story Revolutionary Road.

Despite what fans thought, their friendship never turned romantic off-screen. "He always saw me as one of the boys," said Kate.

Despite falling in love over and over again in movies like The Wedding Singer, 50 First Dates and Blended, Drew Barrymore says she and Adam Sandler have exchanged nothing more than a "church kiss."

"That's probably why we've been able to stick together all these years," she says, "because there never was that awkward moment."

The lesson learned is that chemistry off-screen often leads to good results on the screen, but not always. Tony Curtis and Marilyn Monroe fogged up the lens in Some Like It Hot, but reportedly did not like one another.

"It was like kissing Hitler," said Curtis.

In Review

RICHARD CROUSE

Serena

Director. Susanne Bier

Stars. Jennifer Lawrence, Bradley Cooper

Jennifer Lawrence plays the title character, the ambitious wife of George Pemberton (Bradley Cooper), a lumber baron struggling to keep his business afloat in Depression-era North Carolina. A miscarriage drives a wedge between them, a rift exacerbated by the arrival of a son George fathered by another woman. Serena has all the makings of an epic story. Betrayal, jealousy, murder and money swirl around the central characters, but instead of combining to create a compelling narrative, the elements collide in a big bang of schlock. From the broad southern accents to the dirt-smeared Rhys Ifans as Serena's violent lap dog, everything about this movie seems to verge on caricature.

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Director's debut an ode to Copenhagen

Interview. Toronto's Mark Raso travelled across the ocean to set his tale of wanderlust

STEVE GOW
scene@metronews.ca

As a young filmmaker, it's an arduous endeavour just to make a low-budget movie. But it's a whole other challenge to shoot it in a foreign country.

"We just met fantastic people who were willing to go on this adventure with us," said director Mark Raso about his acclaimed debut feature Copenhagen.

"It wasn't difficult at all — people were welcoming, the city opened itself up to us, the tourism board got involved with the film and we just had a lot of love from the city."

A hit among critics, Copenhagen (which premieres in Toronto/available on VOD elsewhere this Friday) follows an obnoxious college-age tourist (played by HBO's Game of Thrones star Gethin Anthony) who wanders Denmark's titular capital looking to uncover his long lost grandfather. Instead, the irascible Canadian traveller meets a tempting, beautiful stranger that's wise beyond her teenage years.

Quoted

"We shot in the town square on a Thursday night and we were stopping for drunk people every 30 seconds as they were mooning the camera."

Director Mark Raso on shooting his film in Copenhagen

"The interesting thing with our main guy is that in our first draft, he was this nice, lovable guy and the story didn't work," explained the Toronto-born auteur.

"I kept on pushing him and making him meaner and nastier to a point where I think some people just want to turn the movie off after the first 10 minutes. But it seemed to work for the overall story."

Following in the footsteps of Richard Linklater's Before Sunrise trilogy or Sarah Polley's Toronto-centric Take This Waltz, Copenhagen is as much a love letter to the film's European setting as it is a romantic relationship drama. "I really love the youthful energy of the city," said Raso, before noting that Copenhagen's "youthful energy" also led to a couple of dodgy days on set.

"We shot in the town square on a Thursday night and we were stopping for drunk people every 30 seconds as they were mooning the camera," laughed Raso. "But we just waited them out and finished up in the morning."

Gethin Anthony stars in Copenhagen, which opens in Toronto this weekend and VOD. CONTRIBUTED

Behind the scenes

- **His 2011 short film Under may have won a prestigious Student Academy Award, but Raso didn't feel under pressure with his debut feature.** "Under was such a complicated film that (Copenhagen) was a little bit easier in a way," said Raso. "I found around Day 9 or 10 on Copenhagen, I really got into a groove and things became easier and easier."

Michael Murphy puts order to ambiguity

Interview. Canadian filmmaker Terrance Odette says veteran actor brought shape to moral tale that delves deep into faith

STEVE GOW
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In the forthcoming film Fall, actor Michael Murphy plays a kindly priest whose life descends into moral chaos after he receives a cryptic letter from a one-time teenage parishioner — a tragic tale that director Terrance Odette admits is somewhat based on a true story.

"(An) incident happened to me when I was 14 and the letter is something that I never did write but it's something I felt I would've," said Odette ahead of the film's Toronto release this weekend (available on VOD the same day).

"That's the inspiration for starting the story, but I wasn't interested in any kind of autobiographical story.

"I was using the incident and reflecting on this man."

In fact, Odette admits he didn't even truly discover the drama's ambiguous narrative until Murphy came onboard.

A long-time admirer of the character actor's 50-year career appearing in everything from Woody Allen's classic Manhattan to recent thriller White House Down starring Channing Tatum, Odette insists the film only found shape with the reluctant collaborator.

"Truthfully, I liked what he wrote, but I thought they'll never make this movie," explained Murphy.

"I thought this is good, but I've spent my career doing movies about guys who are challenged morally, (but Odette) brought a great gift of a starring role in the kind of picture I want to make because it's cinematic acting."

It's also not the first movie Odette has written with deep questions surrounding faith.

In 2002, Odette earned attention for Saint Monica — a modest festival hit about a young girl obsessed with angels and her Roman Catholic upbringing.

"I'm just harvesting from my own experience and what interests me," explained the Hamilton, Ont.-based filmmaker of his interest in religion.

"It's part of me.

"I'm a person who is fascinated by philosophy; fascinated by why and how people think spiritually.

"It's simply where I mine from."

Michael Murphy plays a priest coping with moral chaos in Fall. CONTRIBUTED

More on Fall

- **Murphy on his initial hesitation.** "I had mixed feelings about it. First of all, I'm old and cynical now," said Murphy. "(And) I thought, do I really want to do a picture that is ostensibly about child molestation?"
- **Murphy on Fall's place in cinema.** "To me, (Fall is) a flashback to the art films we used to watch when I was at college," said 76-year-old Murphy. "Not that this is hard to understand — but it's ambiguous as hell."

The Oscar race this year is already something of a head-scratcher, and right at the centre of it is a surprisingly light field of best actress contenders. Despite a clear front-runner — Julianne Moore for her devastating performance in Still Alice — the category is looking a bit thin. Here's a look at the contenders:

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

A look at a light year of best actresses

The shoo-in

Julianne Moore, Still Alice

Seriously, Moore's toughest acting job now is continuing to be surprised each time she nabs a trophy between now and February 22. She's basically this year's McConaughey.

The sure-thing nominations

Rosamund Pike, Gone Girl

People might have come for a glimpse at Ben Affleck's junk, but they stayed for Pike's surprising, chilly performance.

Reese Witherspoon, Wild

Previous winner Witherspoon turns in a solidly harrowing performance in Wild, but it falls just short of the mark.

Felicity Jones, The Theory of Everything

It took some time for critics to see past the brilliance of her co-star — and another shoo-in nominee — Eddie Redmayne, but Jones should be recognized as well for her stellar work as Stephen Hawking's first wife, Jane.

The strong possibilities

Hillary Swank, The Homesman

Two-time Oscar winner Swank has been looking for that comeback vehicle to bring her a third trophy for a while, and this one came close, but maybe voters just weren't in the mood for a gritty frontier drama this year.

Jennifer Aniston, Cake

While some have dismissed Aniston's turn in this indie as little more than makeup-free stunt-casting, she shows some impressive dramatic chops — which anyone who's seen The Good Girl or Friends with Money already knew.

Might we also recommend

Scarlett Johansson, Under the Skin

If the Academy wanted to play things a little riskier, it could recognize the Avengers star's transformative — and nearly silent — work in Jonathan Glazer's hypnotic and eerie science-fiction thriller.

Emily Blunt, Into the Woods

It might be tough to single out anyone in this sprawling ensemble as a "lead," but Blunt comes closest as the Baker's Wife. And she's a standout in that big cast, holding her own against Meryl Streep, even.

Now in theatres

Drama

Whiplash

Director. Damien Chazelle

Stars. Miles Teller, J.K. Simmons

Andrew Neyman is an ambitious young jazz drummer, single-minded in his pursuit to rise to the top of his elite east coast music conservatory. Plagued by the failed writing career of his father, Andrew hungers day and night to become one of the greats. Terence Fletcher, an instructor equally known for his teaching talents as for his terrifying methods, leads the top jazz ensemble in the school.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score
Critics: 96% **Audience:** 94%

Comedy

Corner Gas: The Movie

Director. David Storey

Stars. Brent Butt, Gabrielle Miller

As the town of Dog River goes bankrupt, the residents of the town must pack up and move out. However, our favourite citizens make one last-ditch effort to save Dog River.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score
Critics: No reviews yet **Audience:** +100%

Documentary

Citizenfour

Director. Laura Poitras

Stars. Edward Snowden

In January 2013, Poitras was several years into making a film about surveillance in the post-9/11 era when she started receiving encrypted e-mails from someone identifying himself as "citizen four," who was ready to blow the whistle on the massive covert surveillance programs run by the NSA and other intelligence agencies. The man turned out to be Edward Snowden.

Rotten Tomatoes™ score
Critics: 96% **Audience:** 92%

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Captain Martin Crieff, Cabin Pressure

As a young pilot with more passion than skill for flying, Cumberbatch is the earnest straight man of the BBC radio comedy Cabin Pressure, which will arrive at the end of its alphabetical journey with a Christmas special this month. He plays the overeager, rule-happy heart of a small private charter firm of one jet and a supporting cast who love him almost as much as they love to make fun of him.

5

times Benedict Cumberbatch did not play an arrogant, but flawed genius

David, Wreckers

Trees are never the only thing that's shady in the English countryside. The idea that those who go to the city are escaping something is alive and well in Wreckers, where a young couple return to David's childhood home to start building a life together. But as soon as they arrive, Cumberbatch becomes less devoted husband and more a product of the abuse and incest that permeate the town — and his relationship with his brother.

Khan, Star Trek Into Darkness

Although Star Trek Into Darkness began as a seemingly straight-up story of a space-age terrorist out to do as much damage to Starfleet as he can, Cumberbatch's villain Khan turned out to have a much more personal agenda when it was revealed that he was merely trying to free his crew, who had been imprisoned by a Starfleet officer. Cumberbatch goes from fury to tears as Khan is revealed to have been manipulated into killing in the name of keeping the peace.

The Creature, Frankenstein

Over the course of Danny Boyle's stage adaptation of Frankenstein, Cumberbatch's Creature struggles with being made of human parts but knowing little of what it means to be one. The Creature rejoices and struggles with, in equal measure, himself, the world and his creator, veering between love and fear, leading him to the most human act of all: revenge.

Christopher Tietjens, Parade's End

Cumberbatch has described his character in this First World War drama as the one he's most attached to. Christopher Tietjens is a simple man who values tradition and lives life by the rules, in his duty as a soldier and as a husband to a manipulative Rebecca Hall (The Prestige). It's a philosophy that makes his encounter with a suffragette and all that a new life with her would entail fraught with anticipation. This one made more than a few stiff upper lips quiver, and earned Cumberbatch an Emmy nod.

WWII hero saved millions, but few know his name

The Imitation Game. Alan Turing invented a computer that cracked Nazi codes, but he was later arrested and castrated for being gay

ANNE BRODIE
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Mathematician, statistician and early computer scientist Alan Turing was a British war hero, but no one knew until years later because no one was supposed to know.

Under the cloak of secrecy at Bletchley Hall, the U.K.'s cypher and spy school, he invented the electromagnetic machine. It was an early computer that broke the German Enigma code and intercepted military messages, assuring an Allied victory.

When Turing's work was finally revealed, Sir Winston Churchill called it "the greatest single contribution to the Allied victory over the Nazis."

Turing may have saved millions of lives and shortened the war by two to four years, but he was arrested for being gay, a crime in the U.K. until 1967, and was forced into chemical castration. It led to his early death in 1952.

Benedict Cumberbatch plays the tragic hero in Morten Tyldum's The Imitation Game, with Matthew Goode and Allen Leech as his Bletchley Park colleagues. They hope to bring Turing's heroism to a new generation.

"There are huge amounts of people that don't know about him," says Cumberbatch. "And (they are) even more important than those who do — people who appreciate what he achieved and stood for, both as a gay icon and as a genius who basically was at the forefront of the birth of the computer age and a war hero.

"The number of people who don't know about him, or only have a scant idea of him, is in extraordinary proportion to his achievements and what he endured in his life. So my kind of weight and responsibility tends towards wanting this to get to as broad an audience as possible."

Benedict Cumberbatch plays Alan Turing in The Imitation Game. CONTRIBUTED

Turing is portrayed as being a loner and difficult to work with, perhaps for fear of being outed. Goode and Leech found that their real life counterparts, Hugh Alexander and John Cairncross, were wary of him.

"He's not the easiest man to like, which is something I liked about Benedict's acting choices," says Goode.

Cumberbatch, Goode and Leech agree Turing was dealt an unfair hand but feel the film is a celebration of his life and work.

"Not just the Enigma Code, but about this man and the team around him — this incredible man who has never been given the proper accolades he deserves," says Leech.

"It's a celebration of why different is good, why different can win a World War," Goode adds.

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Cinema City McGillivray 2190 McGillivray Blvd.

Big Hero 6 (G) Sat-Sun 1:50
Big Hero 6 3D (G) Fri-Sun 4:35-7:15-9:55 Mon 5:05-8:20 Tue 4:35-7:15-9:55 Wed-Thu 5:05-8:20
Citizenfour (PG) Fri 4:20-7:10-9:55 Sat 1:30-4:20-7:10-9:55 Sun 1:20-4:20-7:10-9:55 Mon 5:45-8:45 Tue 4:20-7:10-9:55 Wed-Thu 5:45-8:45
Dumb and Dumber To (PG) Fri-Sun 9:20 Mon 8:05 Tue 9:20 Wed-Thu 8:05
Horrible Bosses 2 (14A) Fri 5-7:45-10:20 Sat 2-5-7:45-10:20 Sun 1:20-4:05-7-9:35 Mon 5:30-8:30 Tue 5-7:45-10:20 Wed-Thu 5:30-8:30 Fri 7:10-10 Sat 4-7:10-10 Sun 4:30-7:20-10 Mon 7:45 Tue 7:10-10 Wed-Thu 7:45
The Hunger Games: Mockingjay, Part 1 (PG) Fri 4-4:25-6:55-7:25-9:50-10:15 Sat 1-1:35-3:50-4:25-6:55-7:25-9:50-10:15 Sun 1-2:30-3:50-5:30-6:55-8:30-9:50 Mon 5-6-8-9 Tue 4-4:25-6:55-7:25-9:50-10:15 Wed-Thu 5-6-8-9 Fri 6:40-7:40-9:30-10:30 Sat 3:30-4:30-6:40-7:40-9:30-10:30 Sun 4-5-6:50-8-9:40 Mon 7-8:30 Tue 6:40-7:40-9:30-10:30 Wed-Thu 7-8:30
Interstellar (PG) Fri 4:30-8:10 Sat-Sun 12:50-4:30-8:10 Mon-Thu 4:30-8:10
Penguins of Madagascar (G) Fri 4:05-6:50 Sat-Sun 1:10-4:05-6:50 Mon 4:55 Tue 4:05-6:50 Wed-Thu 4:55
Penguins of Madagascar 3D (G) Fri 4:55-7:20-9:40 Sat-Sun 2-4:55-7:20-9:40 Mon 4:45-7:35 Tue 4:55-7:20-9:40 Wed-Thu 4:45-7:35

Cinema City Northgate 1399 McPhillips Street

Action Jackson (STC) Fri 4:40-8 Sat-Sun 1:20-4:40-8 Mon-Thu 7
The Book of Life (G) Sat-Sun 1:50
The Book of Life 3D (G) Fri-Sat 4:05-6:40 Sun 4-6:20 Mon-Thu 5:40
Chaar Sahibzaade 3D (PG) Fri 4:10-6:55-9:40 Sat 1:25-4:10-6:55-9:40 Sun 1:25-4:05-6:45-9:25 Mon-Thu 5:25-8
Dracula Untold (14A) Fri 4:35-7:20-9:30 Sat 1:55-4:35-7:20-9:30 Sun 1:55-4:20-7-9:40 Mon-Thu 5:40-8:05
The Equalizer (14A) Fri-Sat 4:15-9 Sun 4:05-8:40 Mon-Thu 8
Guardians of the Galaxy (PG) Sat-Sun 1:30
Guardians of the Galaxy 3D (PG) Fri-Sat 4:20-7:9:45 Sun 4:10-6:50-9:30 Mon-Thu 5:20-8:10
The Judge (14A) Fri-Sat 8:50 Sun 8:30 Mon-Thu 7:40
Left Behind (PG) Fri 6:50 Sat 1:45-6:50 Sun 1:45-6:30 Mon-Thu 5:35
The Maze Runner (PG) Fri-Sat 9:10 Sun 8:50 Mon-Thu 7:50
Past Tense (STC) Fri 4:30-7:10-9:50 Sat 1:40-4:30-7:10-9:50 Sun 1:40-4:30-7:10-9:10 Mon-Thu 5:30-7:55
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (PG) Fri 4-6:30 Sat 1:35-4-6:30 Sun 1:35-3:55-6:25 Mon-Thu 5:20

Cinematheque 304-100 Arthur

Jingle Bell Rocks! (STC) Thu 9
Just Eat It: A Food Waste Story (STC) Fri 9 Sun 2
No Films Showing Today (STC) Tue
Stories From the Neighborhood (STC) Fri-Sat 7
Walking the Camino: Six Ways to Santiago (STC) Sat 9 Sun-Mon 7 Wed-Thu 7

Horrible Bosses 2. CONTRIBUTED

City Cinema - Northgate 1399 McPhillips

Action Jackson (STC) Fri 4:40-8 Sat-Sun 1:20-4:40-8 Mon-Thu 7
The Book of Life (G) Sat-Sun 1:50
The Book of Life 3D (G) Fri-Sat 4:05-6:40 Sun 4-6:20 Mon-Thu 5:40
Chaar Sahibzaade 3D (PG) Fri 4:10-6:55-9:40 Sat 1:25-4:10-6:55-9:40 Sun 1:25-4:05-6:45-9:25 Mon-Thu 5:25-8
Dracula Untold (14A) Fri 4:35-7:20-9:30 Sat 1:55-4:35-7:20-9:30 Sun 1:55-4:20-7-9:40 Mon-Thu 5:40-8:05
The Equalizer (14A) Fri-Sat 4:15-9 Sun 4:05-8:40 Mon-Thu 8
Guardians of the Galaxy (PG) Sat-Sun 1:30
Guardians of the Galaxy 3D (PG) Fri-Sat 4:20-7-9:45 Sun 4:10-6:50-9:30 Mon-Thu 5:20-8:10
The Judge (14A) Fri-Sat 8:50 Sun 8:30 Mon-Thu 7:40
Left Behind (PG) Fri 6:50 Sat 1:45-6:50 Sun 1:45-6:30 Mon-Thu 5:35
The Maze Runner (PG) Fri-Sat 9:10 Sun 8:50 Mon-Thu 7:50
Past Tense (STC) Fri 4:30-7:10-9:50 Sat 1:40-4:30-7:10-9:50 Sun 1:40-4:30-7:10-9:10 Mon-Thu 5:30-7:55
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (PG) Fri 4-6:30 Sat 1:35-4-6:30 Sun 1:35-3:55-6:25 Mon-Thu 5:20

Famous Players Kildonan Place, 1555 Regent Ave W.

Big Hero 6 (G) Sat-Sun 1:30
Big Hero 6 3D (G) Fri-Sun 4:15-7:20-10 Mon-Thu 5:45-8:30
Dumb and Dumber To (PG) Fri 4:20-7-9:50 Sat-Sun 1:45-4:20-7-9:50 Mon-Thu 5:40-8:40
Horrible Bosses 2 (14A) Fri 4:30-7:30-10:15 Sat-Sun 2-4:30-7:30-10:15 Mon-Thu 6-8:45
The Hunger Games: Mockingjay, Part 1 (PG) Fri 3:40-4:10-6:40-7:10-9:40-10:10 Sat-Sun 12:45-1:15-3:40-4:10-6:40-7:10-9:40-10:10 Mon-Thu 5:20-5:50-8:15-8:45
Penguins of Madagascar (G) Sat-Sun 1
Penguins of Madagascar 3D (G) Fri-Sun 3:30-6:50-9:15 Mon-Thu 5:30-8

Grant Park 8 Cinemas 1120 Grant Ave.

Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance) (14A) Fri 3:45-6:45-9:45 Sat-Sun 12:45-3:45-6:45-9:45 Mon-Thu 3:45-6:45-9:45
Exodus: Gods and Kings 3D (PG) Thu 6
Horrible Bosses 2 (14A) Fri 4:10-7:10-10:10 Sat-Sun 1:10-4:10-7:10-10:10 Mon-Thu 4:10-7:10-10:10
The Hunger Games: Mockingjay, Part 1 (PG) Fri 4-7:10 Sat-Sun 1-4-7-10 Mon 4-10 Tue-Thu 4-7-10
Interstellar (PG) Fri-Sat 4-8
Penguins of Madagascar (G) Fri-Thu 5:25
Penguins of Madagascar 3D (G) Fri 3:15-7:35-9:45 Sat 10-12:25-3:15-7:35-9:45 Sun 12:25-3:15-7:35-9:45 Mon-Wed 3:15-7:35-9:45 Thu 3:15 Thu 7:35-9:45
The Royal Ballet - Manon (STC) Sat 11
Royal Opera House: I Due Foscari (STC) Mon 6:30
The Theory of Everything (G) Fri 3:35-6:35-9:35 Sat-Sun 12:35-3:35-6:35-9:35 Mon-Thu 3:35-6:35-9:35

Landmark Towne Cinema 8. 301 Notre Dame Avenue

Big Hero 6 (G) Fri 6:45-9:15 Sat-Sun 1-3:30-6:45-9:15 Mon-Thu 6:45-9:15
Corner Gas: The Movie (PG) Fri 7 Sat-Sun 1:05-7
Dumb and Dumber To (PG) Fri 6:55-9:25 Sat-Sun 1:15-3:50-6:55-9:25 Mon-Thu 6:55-9:25
Exodus: Gods and Kings 3D (PG) Thu 8
Fury (14A) Fri 6:40-9:30 Sat-Sun 12:45-3:40-6:40-9:30 Mon-Thu 6:40-9:30
Horrible Bosses 2 (14A) Fri 7:10-9:35 Sat-Sun 1:10-3:45-7:10-9:35 Mon-Thu 7:10-9:35
The Hunger Games: Mockingjay, Part 1 (PG) Fri 6:50-9:45 Sat-Sun 12:50-3:35-6:50-9:45 Mon-Thu 6:50-9:45
Ouija (PG) Fri 9:50 Sat-Sun 3:55-9:50 Mon-Wed 7-9:10
Penguins of Madagascar (G) Fri 7:05 Sat-Sun 4-7:05 Mon-Thu 7:05
Penguins of Madagascar 3D (G) Fri 9:20 Sat-Sun 1:30-9:20 Mon-Thu 9:20
St. Vincent (14A) Fri 7:15-9:40 Sat-Sun 12:40-3:20-7:15-9:40 Mon-Thu 7:15-9:40

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Big Hero 6 (G) Fri 1:25-4:05 Sat 10:50-1:25-4:05 Sun-Thu 1:25-4:05
Big Hero 6 3D (G) Fri 1:50-4:35-7:10-9:50 Sat 11:10-1:50-4:35-7:10-9:50 Sun 1:35-4:35-7:10-9:50 Mon-Thu 1:50-4:35-7:10-9:50
Bolshoi Ballet: La Bayadere (STC) Sun 12:55
A Christmas Story (STC) Sat 11
Corner Gas: The Movie (PG) Fri 7 Sat-Sun 1-7
Dumb and Dumber To (PG) Fri 2-4:40-7:35-10:25 Sat 11:10-2-4:40-7:35-10:25 Sun-Thu 2-4:40-7:35-10:25
Exhibition on Screen: Matisse (STC) Thu 7:30
Exodus: Gods and Kings 3D (PG) No Passes Thu 8
Horrible Bosses 2 (14A) Fri 1:35-2:20-4:15-5-6:55-7:40-9:40-10:20 Sat 11-11:40-1:35-2:20-4:15-5-6:55-7:40-9:40-10:20 Sun-Tue 1:35-2:20-4:15-5-6:55-7:40-9:40-10:20 Wed 2:20-4:15-5-6:55-7:40-9:40-10:20 Thu 1:35-2:20-4:15-5-6:55-7:40-9:40-10:20 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1:30
The Hunger Games: Mockingjay, Part 1 (PG) Fri-Thu 1:30-4:30-7:30-10:30 Fri 3-3:45-6:30-7:05-9:30-10:05 Sat 12:45-3-3:45-6:30-7-9:30-10 Sun 3:25-6:30-7:05-9:30-10:05 Mon-Tue 3-3:45-6:30-7-9:30-10 Wed 3-3:45-6-6:30-9:30-10 Thu 3-3:45-6:30-9:30-10:05
Interstellar (PG) Fri 1:45-5:30-9:15 Sat-Sun 5:45-9:25 Mon-Tue 1:45-5:30-9:15 Wed 1:45-9:15 Thu 1:45-5:30-9:15
Interstellar: The IMAX Experience (PG) Fri 2:45-6:35-10:15 Sat 11:05-2:45-6:35-10:15 Sun 2:30-6:15-10 Mon-Thu 2:45-6:35-10:15
The Metropolitan Opera: Le Nozze Di Figaro - Encore (STC) Sat 11
National Theatre Live: John (STC) Wed 7
Penguins of Madagascar (G) Fri 1:55-4:20-6:45-9:05 Sat 1:55-3:25-4:20-6:45-9:05 Sun 12:55-1:55-3:30-4:20-4:40-6:45-9:05 Mon-Thu 1:55-4:20-6:45-9:05
Penguins of Madagascar 3D (G) Fri 2:55-5:20-7:45-10:05 Sat 11-12:30-2:55-5:20-7:45-10:05 Sun 12:45-3-5:20-7:45-10:05 Mon-Wed 2:55-5:20-7:45-10:05 Thu 1:20-2:45-5:30
Serena (14A) Fri 1:50-4:30-7:10-9:50 Sat 11:15-1:50-4:30-7:10-9:50 Sun-Tue 1:50-4:30-7:10-9:50 Wed 4:30-7:10-9:50 Thu 1:50-4:30-7:10-9:50 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1:30
St. Vincent (14A) Fri-Sun 9:40 Mon-Thu 7:10-9:45
The Theory of Everything (G) Fri 1:25-4:10-7:05-9:55 Sat 12:05-4:10-7:05-9:55 Sun-Thu 1:25-4:10-7:05-9:55

SilverCity St. Vital 110-1225 St Mary's Rd.

Big Hero 6 (G) Fri 1:25-4:10 Sat 11:50-1:25-4:10 Sun 1:25-4:10 Mon-Wed 1:30-4:10 Thu 4:35 Star & Strollers Screening Thu 1:30
Big Hero 6 3D (G) Fri 2-4:40-7:25-10:10 Sat 11:20-2-4:40-7:25-10:10 Sun-Mon 2-4:40-7:25-10:05 Tue-Thu 2-4:40-7:20-10
A Christmas Story (STC) Sat 11
Corner Gas: The Movie (PG) Fri 7 Sat-Sun 1-7
Dumb and Dumber To (PG) Fri 1:35-5:10-7:05-7:50-10:10-10:30 Sat 2:30-5:10-7:05-7:50-10:10-10:30 Sun-Wed 1:35-5-7:05-7:40-10:10-10:20 Thu 1:50-5-7:05-10:10
Exodus: Gods and Kings 3D (PG) No Passes Thu 8
Horrible Bosses 2 (14A) Fri 2:20-5-7:45-10:25 Sat 12:05-2:20-5-7:45-10:25 Sun-Thu 2:20-5-7:45-10:20
The Hunger Games: Mockingjay, Part 1 (PG) Fri 1-2-3:30-4-6:30-9:30-10 Sat 12:30-3:30-4-6:30-9:30-10 Sun 2-3:30-4-6:30-9:30-10 Mon-Tue 2-3:30-4-6:30-7-9:30-10 Wed 1:30-2-4-4:30-7-7:30-10-10:15 Thu 2-3:30-4-7-9:30-10 Fri-Sat 1:30-4:30-7:30-10:30 Sun-Tue 1:30-4:30-7:30-10:20 Wed 3-10:20 Thu 1:30-4:30-7:30-10:20
Interstellar (PG) Fri-Sat 3-6:35-9:35 Sun-Wed 3-6:35-9:30 Thu 6:35-9:30 Star & Strollers Screening Thu 1:30
Penguins of Madagascar (G) Fri 1:05-4:30-7:10-9:40 Sat 11:30-12-2-4:30-7:10-9:40 Sun 1:05-4:30-7:10-9:40 Mon-Wed 1:40-4:30-7:10-9:40 Thu 1:40-4:30-7:10-10:15
Penguins of Madagascar 3D (G) Fri 2:50-5:15-7:40-10:05 Sat 12:25-2:50-5:15-7:40-10:05 Sun-Thu 2:50-5:15-7:40-10:05

Bonding time with the Spectre set

British actress Naomi Harris, left, French actress Lea Seydoux, British actor Daniel Craig, Italian actress Monica Bellucci and Austrian actor Christoph Waltz will star in the next James Bond film Spectre, in a new outing promising a strong dose of 007 nostalgia. The movie — titled after a global criminal organization featuring in the early Bond films — will be shot in Mexico City, Rome and Tangiers and will also see Britain's famous spy returning to the ski slopes, in Austria, director Sam Mendes said on Thursday at Pinewood Studios. AFP

Bad guys club

Will Smith, Jared Leto, Tom Hardy suit up for Suicide Squad

Will Smith, Jared Leto and Tom Hardy are suiting up for DC Comics' supervillain team-up film Suicide Squad.

Warner Bros. confirmed the much anticipated casting of the film in an announcement Tuesday.

Smith will star as Deadshot, Hardy will play the group's leader, Rick Flagg, and Leto will take on the Joker, following in Heath Ledger's footsteps.

The rest of the gang will be Margot Robbie as Harley Quinn; Jai Courtney as Boomerang; and Cara Delevinge as Enchantress.

David Ayer, who recently released the Second World War tank thriller Fury, will write and direct.

Suicide Squad is to be released in August 2016.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Animated short. Frozen franchise shows no signs of cooling as film announced

Frozen favourites Anna, Elsa, and Olaf are headed back to the big screen in a new short film.

Walt Disney Animation Studios announced Wednesday it plans to show Frozen Fever in front of the live-action Cinderella that opens in theatres March 13.

The short reunites the Oscar-winning directing team from Frozen: Jennifer Lee and Chris Buck.

It will tell the story of Elsa and Kristoff's attempt to plan a birthday party for Anna.

Frozen is the fifth-highest grossing film of all time, with over $1.27 billion worldwide, and it continues to resonate with audiences.

Disney has had massive success with live-action updates of its animated classics, including 2014's Maleficent. But the promise of a Frozen short with Cinderella will likely prove to be icing on their fairy tale cake.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Miley Cyrus INSTAGRAM

Miami has itself a merry little Cyrus as Miley brings the silver and bold

What would the holidays be without a little tinsel? Or a lot, for that matter.

While down in Miami for Art Basel, Miley Cyrus decked her halls with a silver tinsel wig, sheer silver tights and glittery mirror ball pasties — oh, and a silver over-the-shoulder thong, which I didn't know was actually a thing.

She performed at the annual event's opening night party, telling the crowd, "You thought this was a respected place where you could escape me?" 'Tis the season, y'all.

Axl Rose GETTY IMAGES

Ho! Ho! Hoax! Axl Rose may be over 50 but he ain't dead yet

Good news for Guns N' Roses fans! The reports of singer Axl Rose's death have been greatly exaggerated.

A fake MSNBC report — much like the recent hoax claiming Macaulay Culkin had perished — went out recently claiming that Rose, 52, had been found dead in his West Hollywood home.

But while totally bogus, the hoax did raise at least one question for the man himself: "If I'm dead do I still have to pay taxes?" he tweeted.

Personally, I'm still reeling from the fact that Axl Rose is 52 now.

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Rachel beams Ray of sunshine at Ms. Goop and MaStew

NED EHRBAR
Metro in Hollywood

In the ongoing conflict between home living guru Martha Stewart and self-styled upstart Gwyneth Paltrow, Rachael Ray has decided to be the Switzerland.

During a visit to Watch What Happens Live, Ray was pressed to take a side in the dispute and chose to remain neutral.

"I'm on team food. I think everybody who likes to eat has a different take on it and everybody's opinion should be respected," she tells Andy Cohen.

"I love Gwyneth Paltrow. I think that she is very devoted to everything she puts her mind to, and I think she is really a brilliant cookbook author. She writes in many different disciplines."

And Stewart?

"I have to have nothing but respect for Martha Stewart. She is a forerunner. I wouldn't have a job without the people who came before me ... Martha Stewart created an avenue for women who work in lifestyle television — period. You have to have respect for all people's opinions ... in my opinion."

Loni Anderson GETTY IMAGES

The way to Burt's art is through ex Loni's auction

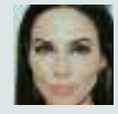
If Burt Reynolds can auction off a whole bunch of personal junk, then so can ex-wife Loni Anderson.

The former WKRP in Cincinnati star is looking to unload nearly 65 items she received from Reynolds over the years, including a nearly-nude portrait of Anderson.

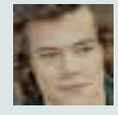
"He loved art, so he would go pick out a favorite artist and then he would commission them to do a portrait of me," Anderson says. "So pretty soon, there are a lot of portraits of me."

So, um, any takers?

Twitter



@WhitneyCummings
I just ate airport salmon in case anyone wants to propose to me



@Harry_Styles
You can tell far too much about a person by which monopoly piece they play as.

@Courtney
I feel like your auntie... Stop that s--- @Harry_Styles

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Ricardo is a Canadian chef, television host and author on a mission: To unite people through the pleasure of food. Discover his delicious and simple recipes every Friday — just in time for the weekend

Turn up the heat

This recipe serves four. COURTESY RICARDOCUISINE.COM

Shrimp and Coconut Milk Thai Soup.

Although this recipe requires a long list of ingredients, it comes together in a snap

RICARDO COOKS
Chef Ricardo
Ricardo Magazine

As most of the country heads toward a deep freeze (or at least colder weather), wanderlust is inevitable.

What's the best solution — short of jumping on a flight to somewhere warm?

Exotic flavours inspired by lands far, far away with key ingredients that include coconut, curry and plenty of delicious heat.

This Shrimp and Coconut Milk Thai Soup is a perfect example of such a warming and exotic meal.

Don't be intimidated by the list of ingredients.

This soup is so quick to prepare that it's worth serving as a meal-in-a-bowl.

1. In a large saucepan, brown the shiitake mushrooms and jalapeno pepper (or pepper sauce) in the oil. Season with salt and pepper. Add the garlic, fresh ginger, tomato paste and curry powder, paprika and cinnamon, and sauté for 1 to 2 minutes.

2. Add the coconut milk, chicken broth, snow peas (or broccoli), lime zest and lime juice. Bring to a boil and simmer gently for about 3 minutes or until the peas are al dente.

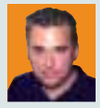
3. Add the shrimp and bring to a boil. Continue cooking for about 2 minutes or until the shrimp are cooked. Adjust the seasoning. When ready to serve, garnish with green onions. **FOLLOW RICARDO ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND ON RICARDOCUISINE.COM OR SUBSCRIBE TO HIS MAGAZINE'S ENGLISH EDITION, WHICH LAUNCHED THIS SEPTEMBER!**

Ingredients

- 8 shiitake mushrooms, sliced
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and finely chopped, or hot pepper sauce, to taste
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) vegetable oil
- Salt and pepper
- 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp fresh ginger, chopped
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) tomato paste
- 1 tbsp curry powder
- 2 tsp ground paprika
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 cans (14 oz/398 ml) coconut milk
- 2 cups (500 ml) chicken broth
- 2 cups snow peas, cut lengthwise into three strips or broccoli florets
- Grated zest of 2 limes
- Juice of 1/2 lime
- 1 1/2 lb (675 g) shelled raw shrimp, with or without the tail
- 3 green onions, thinly sliced diagonally

Liquid Assets

Warm up wine glasses



LIQUID ASSETS
Peter Rockwell
@therealwineguy
liquidassets@eastlink.ca

I'm not sure where the year went, but here we are in chilly December dreaming of summer and a wine to warm up our evenings. Port tops my list.

The last to comply, Canadian wineries have finally agreed to leave its name off their labels, so the term port will only appear on bottles from its true homeland of Portugal.

Winemakers in Canada have chosen the term "tawny" to identify their fortified wines that pay homage to the real stuff.

In the wine world, port is an odd duck. Best served with only a slight chill, its boozy bouquet and muscular punch of berry doesn't play well with novice palates.

Pigeonholed as an after dinner sipper, its stand alone sensibility works brilliantly with blue and cheddar cheeses, almonds, walnuts, dried fruit and chocolate.

Warre's Otima 10 Year Old Port (500 ml, $22.90 - $27.99) is a 21st-century take on a true tawny. Bright and fruity, with a relaxed flavour flow, it's a tasty way to embrace winter. **PRICES REFLECT THE RANGE ACROSS THE COUNTRY. SOME PRODUCTS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE IN ALL PROVINCES.**

Mix up your wine and spirits this season

The gift of booze.
Broaden your palate and try any of these for some holiday cheer

PETER ROCKWELL
For Metro

While it may be the most wonderful time of year to get innovative with your liquid gift-giving, it's likely many of you reach for the same old bottle when spreading holiday cheer. Wine and spirit fans come in all shapes, sizes and levels of engagement, so here are some unique ideas to make their season merry.

For the wine newbie
If you know someone who's treading water when it comes to expanding their vinous horizons, these wines will open their minds and palates.

Apothic 2012 Red (California, $15.95*): The wine that started the sweet red phenomenon still leads the pack with its cocktail-like balance of sugar and ripe berry sweetness.

The Grinder 2012 Pinotage (South Africa, $13.95): No baristas were harmed in the making of this wine. This wild berry red gets its fusion of mocha, java, and chocolate from oak aging.

Montalto 2013 Pinot Grigio (Italy, $8.95): Fun to say and easy to drink; pinot grigio is the "it" white grape of the 21st century. Soft, fruity and with crisp acidity, this Sicilian delivers as much flavour as a version at twice the price.

Jacob's Creek 2013 Moscato (Australia, $11.45): Light in alcohol, but big in round, tropical flavours makes this the perfect entry-level white.

For the wine enthusiast
Have someone on your list who knows their way around a wine glass? These wines will pop their cork.

Monte Antico 2009 Toscano IGT (Italy, $15.95): A baby Super Tuscan made from sangiovese, merlot and cabernet sauvignon. She's loaded with plum, black cherry and dark anise with an astonishing balance of tannins and acid.

Ringbolt 2012 Cabernet Sauvignon (Australia, $19.85): Down Under is no slouch when it comes to cabernet. Calling Western Australia's Margaret River home, Ringbolt's one meaty, mouthful of black fruit.

Caymus 2011 Conundrum White (California, $24.95): The original New World white blend combines over five different grapes to reach its goal of peach, melon, citrus and pepper spice.

La Fiole du Pape Châteauneuf-du-Pape (France, $39.95): A crooked bottle covered in a dirty glaze has made this red the most recognized wine in the Rhône Valley. A mix of multiple vintages, its textured, earthy mouth-feel is seductively accessible.

For the whisky lover
Scotland doesn't own the rights to great whisky and these tasty versions think outside the bottle.

Writer's Tears Pot Still Irish Whiskey (Ireland, $50.75): The champagne of Irish whiskies and a style favoured by that country's prolific writing community who love its old-school expression of honey, fruit and flowers.

Glen Breton Rare Canadian Whisky (Nova Scotia, $79.80): The lightly-malted flavour of Canada's only single malt whisky will appeal to scotch nerds and all brown spirit enthusiasts.

Canadian Club Chairman's Select 100% Rye (Canada, $27.25): We're known for rye. If you know a Mad Men fan, this thick, rich rye has their name on it.

For the sparkling wine fan
Add some sparkle to their season with a gift that's fun and fizzy.

Freixenet Cordon Negro Brut Cava (Spain, $13.95): Made like champagne, this Spaniard pushes all the bubbly buttons and makes a solid foundation for your Christmas morning mimosa.

Fresita (Chile, $13.95): For the mixology impaired. This sparkler is married with Chilean strawberries to create a fruit-fest.

Bollinger Special Cuvée Brut Champagne (France, $75.95): Bollinger has been James Bond's brand since Pierce Brosnan first played the role, which makes this non-vintage version the go-to gift for a '007' fan.

If money is no object
Something for those who have been very good this year.

Bottega 2009 Il Vino Prêt-à-Porter Riserva Amarone della Valpolicella Classico (Italy, $99.95): Wrapped in leather and studs, this full-bodied Italian red will appeal to anyone with fashion sense and collectors who want their wines to cellar for at least five years.

Rémy Martin Louis XIII Cognac (France, $3,100): You can find more expensive booze, but this king of cognac — made from a blend of spirits up to 100 years old — is a bucket list brandy in a Baccarat crystal decanter.

Grey Goose VX Vodka (France, $100): Miles ahead of the flock of ultra-premium vodka, this reinterpretation of Grey Goose is in limited supply and lands with a hint of cognac added to the blend.

Patron Añejo Tequila (Mexico, $99.95): Forget about the lime juice; aged in oak for at least 12 months, this is tequila that begs to be sipped slowly, instead of hidden in a margarita.

**Prices reflect the range across the country. Some products may not be available in all provinces.*

Clockwise from top left: Bollinger Special Cuvée Brut Champagne, $75.95; Writer's Tears Whiskey, $50.75; Fresita, $13.95; Apothic Red, $15.95; Patron Anejo, $99.95.

HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE 2014

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Some tips on the best ways to watch movies this season

MIKE YAWNEY
For Metro

Bring the movies home this holiday season. Instead of buying every family member a gift, go big and purchase a home theatre everyone can enjoy together. From curved screens to projectors, the choices are endless. Here are some of the best options to enjoy true movie magic.

LG 55EC9300 Curved OLED TV
$4,999.99

If you've never seen an OLED display, you don't know what you're missing. Not only is this 4K television insanely thin (5.08 mm), it displays rich colour and perfect blacks. The screen is also curved to create a more immersive viewing experience, drawing you into the action. With a price tag just shy of $5,000 you have to be pretty darn good for Santa to deliver this under the tree.

Samsung 55" Curved UHD TV
$4,199.00

Ultra-high definition televisions (4K) have four times the resolution of traditional high definition. This panel features four HDMI inputs so you can hook all your high-definition devices up without running out of space. What sets many Samsung TVs apart from the rest is the ability to upgrade processors after you buy them, which means you'll always have the latest technology. Keep in mind that Ultra-HD and 4K content is still limited.

Vizio 60" E Series Smart TV
$949.99

Proof you don't have to break the bank to get a big screen home for the holidays. New to Canada, the Vizio brand is known for bringing great picture quality at affordable prices. This stunning 60" display has a lot of bells and whistles, including premium apps, and built-in Wi-Fi, yet the price is significantly cheaper than the competition.

BenQ HT1075 Projector
$999.99

You don't always need a lot of space to install a projector in your home theatre. This projector from BenQ is able to create a 100" HD image on any wall with as little as eight feet. The optional wireless package allows you to stream 1080p HD content from your favourite device across the room with no wires.

Epson 5030UB
$2,999.99

With ultra-black levels and THX certification, this premium projector is a movie buff's dream. Epson's 5030UB can project in both 2D and 3D on a screen up to 300 inches. It's not cheap, but when you consider how much money it is to take your family to the movies, this gorgeous projector will pay itself off in no time. Available online only.

Logitech Harmony Smart Keyboard
$149.99

A wireless keyboard, touchpad and remote control all in one. This handy device makes it easier to search for shows, and navigate menus on media devices like Roku and Apple TV. Activity buttons offer a one-touch solution to turning on your entertainment system without searching for individual remotes. Controls up to eight devices at once.

Sennheiser RS180 Wireless Headphones
$499.99

Tired of telling your family to turn down the volume on the television when you go to bed? These headphones may be the perfect gift. Comfortable fit with superb sound quality, these wireless headphones connect to devices giving you a personal audio experience without disturbing others. The wireless range is impressive, letting you walk as far as 328 feet from the base.

Apple TV
$109

A handy little device which lets you watch movies, listen to music, and stream photos and videos from your Mac, iPad and iPhone to your television. Although the hardware hasn't been updated in a couple of years, it still remains one of the smallest and easiest to use devices for accessing Netflix.

Clockwise from bottom left, Vizio 60" E Series Smart TV, $949.99; Apple TV, $109; Logitech Harmony Smart Keyboard, $149.99; Samsung 55" Curved UHD TV, $4,199; BenQ HT1075 Projector, $999.99; Sennheiser RS180 Wireless Headphones, $499.99; LG 55EC9300 Curved OLED TV, $4,999.99; Epson 5030UB, $2,999.99.

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Ho ho home viewing for the holidays

Yuletide TV. Any of these shows will get you in the festive spirit

RICK MCGINNIS
For Metro

Once upon a time we used to comb the TV guide with a pencil looking for the seasonal screenings of our favourite Christmas movies or TV specials — those annual chestnuts that we relied on to put us in our Yuletide happy place while the season's deadlines and shopping lists threatened to snuff out our Christmas spirit with a Grinch-like meanness.

Now, of course, there's a generation that doesn't know or care what a TV guide is, and regards one's tales of waiting for a certain hour on a certain night to see a show as not merely quaint but perhaps a crime against democracy. Now, of course, we can collect our favourite shows and tuck them away in the same box with the wreath, the tree stand and the Hanukkah menorah.

Several TV shows have collected their holiday episodes and specials on DVD for the holidays.

For kids there's Octonauts: A Very Vegimal Christmas (Octonauts), Thomas & Friends: The Christmas Engines (Universal), Peppa Pig: Peppa's Christmas (EOne), and Penguins of Madacascar: Operation Special Delivery.

For grown-ups there's The Big Bang Theory: Holiday Episodes (Warner,) Robot Chicken's Christmas Specials (Warner), and the inevitable DVD reissues of the Bing Crosby chestnut White Christmas (Paramount) and Alistair Sim's essential A Christmas Carol (VCI) — colourized, so be warned. And if your Christmas has been altogether too peaceful and tasteful, there's Here Comes Honey Boo-Boo: A Very Boo Christmas (Discovery).

Finally, there's an informal home video tradition that Christmas is the season when overlooked classic films get dusted off and given the deluxe reissue treatment.

The vaults have been well-excavated during the last decade or so, but this year, KI Studio Classics has dug out Pocketful of Miracles, the last feature by Frank Capra (It's A Wonderful Life) starring Bette Davis, Glenn Ford and Ann-Margret in a story about a gangster who helps a poor street vendor keep up the illusion that she's a grand society dame when her daughter visits from Europe.

You can feel the old studio system shutting down as you watch this 1961 film, made with all the verve and production values of a big budget film but in a world that's changing too quickly. For classic film fans, it will give the holidays just a little extra bittersweet feeling.

Christmas Classics

- Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer debuted on NBC on Dec. 6, 1964, while A Charlie Brown Christmas first aired on CBC, Dec. 9, 1965, and won an Emmy.

Box sets for the TV lover

If someone on your Christmas list has asked for a honking fat box set of TV shows or movies, it's because they understand that Christmas isn't just the holly, jolly holiday near the end of the year, but the last time to stockpile entertainment for a long, tedious winter.

The big score this season is undoubtedly Breaking Bad: The Complete Series (Sony), which comes packaged in a little chemical barrel with a printed episode guide, something called a "commemorative challenge coin" and an apron from Los Pollos Hermanos, Gustavo Fring's meth-brewing front business. Bonus material includes a two-hour documentary on the show, character profiles of Walt, Hank, Marie, Saul, Jesse and Skyler, and more.

Another cable series that recently completed its run is True Blood, which HBO is releasing in a complete series set that includes the secret files of Vamp Camp, and an interactive feature that helps you untangle the complicated relationships between characters both before and during its seven seasons.

For shut-ins of a certain generation, the top of their wishlist is probably occupied by Pee-Wee's Playhouse: The Complete Series (Shout Factory), the giddy and abidingly strange "is it really a children's TV show?" that was a favourite of Generation X during its mid-to-late '80s run. All forty-five episodes are here, as well as bonus features on the making of the show, the music, and reminiscences by actors and fans.

If any vintage TV series has an appeal that crosses generations, though, it would be the original Batman starring Adam West as the caped crusader. Available piecemeal over the years in often inferior dubs, this is the definitive version from Warner Home Video with all 120 original episodes as they aired between 1966 and 1968. Special features have titles like Hanging with Batman, Holy Memorabilia Batman! and Na Na Na Batman.

Fans of British TV will have their weekends colonized by box sets like Dr. Who: The Matt Smith Years (BBC) and Downton Abbey: Seasons 1-4 (PBS) and the Sherlock gift set from BBC Home Video that includes all three seasons so far, another disc of special features, and a pair of matching decorative busts of Benedict Cumberbatch's Holmes and Martin Freeman's Watson.

Movie box sets are thick on the shelves as well, starting with anniversary sets devoted to the Alien films (Fox,) a Woody Allen box featuring five of his most recent films from Sony, and a 40th anniversary box set of Texas Chainsaw Massacre (MPI) that comes in a cardboard replica of the Black Maria — the 18-wheeler truck from the film's grisly finale.

RICK MCGINNIS/FOR METRO

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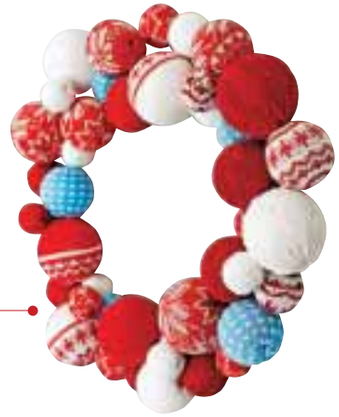
Naughty/Nice Wool Pillows, $64.50/each, Indigo, indigo.ca

Holiday Ribbon dessert plates (set of 4), $38.50, Indigo, indigo.ca.

Colourblock Stocking, 21.5", $14.99/each, Canadian Tire, canadiantire.ca.



Knitted Wreath, $19.99, Lowes, lowes.ca.

White On Silver Snowflake Stocking, $16.99, lowes.ca

Holiday Essentials Santa Tea Pot, $10, Loblaws, loblaws.ca.

Life At Home Print Fleece Sherpa Throw, $19, Loblaws, loblaws.ca.

Burlap Santa Sacks $5.99/each, Winners and HomeSense winners.ca, homesense.ca.

Santa Belt Pillow: $36.99, Michaels, canada.michaels.com

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Blue Crazy Stripe Trapper Hat, Boys, $26.95, Gap Kids, gapcanada.ca.

Animal Hats, $7, Michaels, canada.michaels.com.

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Luxury awaits at the Grand Hotel

State-of-the-art site is more than comfortable

CONTRIBUTED

Historically for the weary business traveller, airport-area hotels have been little more than a place to rest your head and prepare for the next stop on the road. But it doesn't have to be. And The Grand Hotel by Lakeview at the Winnipeg International Airport is more than a just a place to stay -— it's a home away from home.

"We know there's no place like home, but we do our best to ensure that the Grand Hotel is the next best thing," explains Danielle Streilein, the assistant general manager. "With first-class, elite amenities, all the state-of-the-art modern conveniences you'd expect, and an outstanding dining option courtesy of The Blue Marble Restaurant & Lounge, we believe this is a more welcoming experience.

"We want this to be a destination not just for travellers, but for people in Winnipeg looking to spend an evening away from it all."

Staying at the Grand Hotel is a true Winnipeg experience. From the floor-to-ceiling windows that open out to the beauty of Manitoba, to the more modern conveniences like in-house automated Starbucks barista, a smart business centre, in-room Netflix, free Wi-fi, spa-inspired bathrooms, and an e-concierge board to help keep you connected, the hotel has it all.

And when it's time to eat, The Blue Marble Restaurant & Lounge features a seasonal menu complemented by an in-house herb-and-micro-green cultivator, and opens at 6 a.m., with the lounge staying open until midnight. It also offers tapas-style cuisine — small plates that are perfect for sharing.

And for those looking to get away, do some holiday shopping, or just get away from it all, the Four Points by Sheraton — a sister property attached to the Grand by a climate-controlled walkway — has the perfect Suite Deal for you. See the attached fact box for details.

"We want to make your stay at the Grand as memorable, enjoyable, and relaxing as possible," Streilein added. "Our 24-hour concierge service is on-hand to help you with whatever you need — even if you've forgotten your phone charger, we have some on hand to serve you."

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FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON

Late Habs captain

Jean Béliveau to get state funeral

As befits one of the rarest and greatest sporting heroes Montreal has ever known, Canadiens legend Jean Béliveau will be getting an honour rarely accorded to non-politicians: A state funeral.

Béliveau, who died Tuesday at age 83, will be given "funérailles nationals" next Wednesday, Dec. 10, Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard announced Wednesday afternoon.

"Mr. Béliveau was respected, admired, but above all loved by Quebecers," said Couillard in a written statement. " ... Everyone remembers Mr. Béliveau as one of the best players in the history of the National Hockey League, but above all, as a gentleman. He filled not just Quebec with pride, but the whole world of hockey."

Béliveau, will "lay in wake" at the Bell Centre Sunday and Monday. His funeral will be held next Wednesday at the Mary Queen of the World Cathedral. Provincial flags will fly at half-mast across Quebec until after the funeral.

In 2000, tens of thousands of Montrealers lined the streets to pay tribute to the only other athlete to be accorded state funeral honours in Quebec, Béliveau's old teammate, Maurice (Rocket) Richard.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Beliveau's playoff stats

A story in Thursday's Metro on Jean Béliveau should have read that the Canadiens great was the all-time leading playoff scorer with 176 points in 162 games at the time of his retirement in 1971.

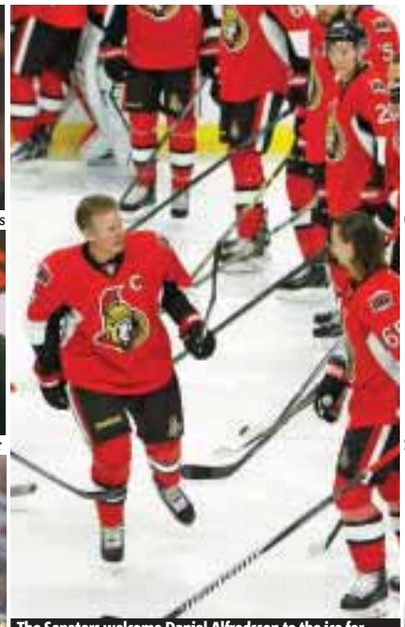
Alfie finally back 'where he belongs'

NHL. Former captain takes final laps on CTC ice before Sens game

Rookie season, 1995 GETTY IMAGES

Calder winner, June '96 ALLSPORT

Vs. Leafs, April '04 GETTY IMAGES


The Senators welcome Daniel Alfredsson to the ice for warm-up before Thursday's game against the New York Islanders. FRED CHARTRAND/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Gold-medal game, '06 GETTY IMAGES

Stanley Cup final, '07 GETTY IMAGES

Winter Classic, '14 GETTY IMAGES

Daniel Alfredsson laced up his skates at his old stall in the Senators' locker-room and put on the No. 11 jersey with the "C" on the chest just like old times. Except this was anything like old times.

Players stepped onto the ice for warm-ups and made a receiving line for the man who earlier in the day announced his retirement. They tapped their sticks and Alfredsson saluted the adoring crowd for the first of many times as "Alfie" chants rained down.

A remix of Alfredsson's former goal song and one of his favourites, U2's Beautiful Day, played. This was a one-of-a-kind moment for a one-of-a-kind face of the franchise.

The traditional countdown to 11 minutes on the clock happened even before the game against the New York Islanders. Alfredsson met with team leaders Erik Karlsson, Chris Phillips and Chris Neil as he always used to, took a few line rushes and got to take part in his favourite post-practice game of keep-away.

"Being a part of it, in Ottawa, this is where he belongs," Neil, who played 11 seasons with Alfredsson, said before the game. "If it happened in Detroit it just wouldn't be the same."

Karlsson, the ninth captain in Senators history and Alfredsson's best friend on the team, even took the "C" off his jersey for warm-ups.

While the Islanders went about their business, no Ottawa player left the ice until Alfredsson took one last lap with his stick raised. The 41-year-old, signed a ceremonial one-day contract in order to retire with the Sens.

Alfredsson took one more lap, with the spotlight on him, and stood at centre ice waiting for wife Bibi and sons Hugo, Loui, Fenix and William Erik to join him. They took their place on the red carpet like Ottawa royalty, and Alfredsson thanked the fans "for all the great moments and all the beautiful memories."

He didn't want to say goodbye. The Alfredsson family sang along to 'O Canada,' and then the former captain had a ceremonial faceoff with the puck dropped by the kids.

Alfredsson, who promised this year would be for his family, skated off alongside his wife as he left the ice at Canadian Tire Centre for the final time. THE CANADIAN PRESS

MacArthur gives up his spot

"There's going to be a lot of jitters. I'm already nervous. I don't know why as it has nothing to do with me, but it's going to be a big night."

Senators winger Clarke MacArthur who didn't mind being relegated to a corner seat in the locker-room to allow Daniel Alfredsson to return to his regular stall one last time

Cohon down to his final month as CFL commish

CFL commissioner Mark Cohon poses with the Grey Cup in Vancouver on Nov. 28. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Life after the CFL will begin in early January for Mark Cohon.

The league announced Thursday that Cohon will step down as commissioner Jan. 9 under a mutual agreement between Cohon and the league's board of governors. Board chairman Jim Lawson will then assume the role of interim commissioner until Cohon's replacement is found.

Lawson also heads up the committee that's searching for Cohon's successor. Cohon's contract as commissioner is due to expire in April.

"Excellent candidates have come forward and while there is no firm deadline for naming the next commissioner, the process is going well," Lawson said in a statement. "I look forward to working closely with CFL president Michael Copeland, the senior staff at the CFL league office and our clubs across the country to continue our efforts to accelerate the growth of our league and plan for the 2015 season."

In August, Cohon announced he wouldn't seek a contract extension to remain on the job after his current deal ended. It's unclear if the league bought out the remainder of Cohon's contract or will continue to pay him through completion of the deal.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Winding down

Cohon has been the commissioner since 2007 and signed a three-year contract extension in 2012.

4 SPORTS

NHL

Wild mumps outbreak catches defenceman Suter

Minnesota Wild defenceman Ryan Suter is the latest on the team to come down with the mumps.

Suter is the fifth Wild player believed to have caught the mumps this season. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tennis

Eugenie Bouchard named female player of 2014

Eugenie Bouchard is Tennis Canada's female player of the year after making the Wimbledon final and two other Grand Slam semi-finals, jumping from 32nd to fifth in the WTA world rankings. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Eugenie Bouchard playing in Singapore in October. Canada's highest-ranked singles player ever was named female player of 2014. MOHD FYROL/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Curling

Homan defeats Nedohin with her final stone

Rachel Homan drew to the button with her final stone to score one and beat Heather Nedohin 5-4 on Thursday at the Home Hardware Canada Cup curling tournament.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Rio 2016

Brassard named chef de mission

Olympic moguls champion Jean-Luc Brassard will be Canada's chef de mission for the 2016 Rio Olympics.

Brassard competed in four Olympic Games, capturing gold in 1994 in Lillehammer, Canada's first-ever Olympic gold in skiing.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

On the road. Casey extols 'business approach'

It is perhaps the greatest compliment that could have been paid to the Raptors.

They had just easily dismantled an inferior foe under what could have been difficult circumstances, the second game of a back-to-back in an arena that's notoriously hard on visiting teams, with their top scorer back home injured and questions abounding about recent defensive slippage.

Any number of former Raptors teams would have given in to one or all of those difficulties, folded in the face of adversity, shied from the moment.

This group?

This group took the game by the throat in the opening minutes and never let go, leaving coach Dwane Casey to offer high praise indeed.

"We're developing a business approach, a professional approach, a mature approach about the game and that's what you ask for from a team like this that's young," he said after Toronto crushed the Utah Jazz 123-104 for its second successive win on a quick three-game western foray.

"We came in and took care of business. There wasn't any bullcrap; there wasn't any laughing and joking around. Guys came in with a focused attitude to start the game."

Raptors coach Dwane Casey THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

There does seem to be some steely resolve to this group, something that doesn't let them get shaken by anything. With all that could have gone wrong — and all that would have been understandable when explained — they hung a 69-point first half on the Jazz and simply beat them into submission.

Kyle Lowry had a career-high 39 points, five other Raptors were in double figures and Casey was even OK with Toronto's defensive effort.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Charity game

Ujiri pays back

Friday marks the one-year anniversary of Nelson Mandela's death at the age of 95.

Masai Ujiri and the Raptors will celebrate Friday in an all-star benefit.

Ujiri has assembled an all-star lineup for the event, including NBA legends Charles Barkley, Magic Johnson and Dikembe Mutombo, along with UN Goodwill Ambassador and 1999 Miss Universe winner Mpule Kwelagobe.

Other guests include Raptors alumnus Tracy McGrady, Toronto Maple Leaf goaltender Jonathan Bernier and Leafs president Brendan Shanahan, former Toronto Argonauts star Michael (Pinball) Clemons and others.

Funds raised will go to both the Nelson Mandela Foundation and Ujiri's Giants of Africa.

Ujiri founded Giants of Africa in 2003 to enrich the lives of children in Africa and to shine a spotlight on the abundance of untapped talent there.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Acing the slopes of Lake Louise

Mirjam Puchner of Austria races down the hill during the third training run for the World Cup women's downhill ski race on Thursday in Lake Louise, Alta. Puchner and fellow Austrian Anna Fenninger were fastest, while U.S. star Lindsey Vonn was 13th. FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Herdman sees turf as a 'home advantage'

Women's soccer. Canada's coach shies away from controversy over players' lawsuit against FIFA, Canadian Soccer Association

While some denigrate the use of artificial turf at the Women's World Cup, Canada's English coach John Herdman pragmatically sees it as an advantage.

The Canadian women have stayed out of the fray, for the most part.

Players behind a legal challenge surrounding the artificial surface elected not to involve the Canadians, given that the Canadian Soccer Association doubles as the 2015 tournament's organizing committee.

Herdman says he and his staff have tried to keep the chatter about the legal challenge out of sight and out of mind.

"Pretty much all our home matches over the last two years have been on turf.

"So it's not a shock. It's a consistent surface for our players. There are definite pros of doing it. There are also cons in many people's minds. But I think what's been great about our players (is) they just accepted the challenge and said, 'Look, we'll become turf experts. We'll become experts at playing on turf and we'll use that as one of our home advantages over the opponents who may have a mindset and be stuck on other things.'"

The lawyer for the women challenging artificial turf kept the pressure up Thursday ahead of Saturday's tournament draw by releasing another letter to FIFA secretary-general Jerome Valcke.

Unable to get the FIFA executive to talk to players via conference call, lawyer Hampton Dellinger sent a "Top 10 list of pressing questions."

No. 3 reads, "How can you justify playing the World Cup final at Vancouver's BC Place on a surface that players have likened to concrete?"

The letter also questions the credentials and connections of FIFA consultants and experts as well as the difference between prize money at the men's and women's tournaments.

A group of top female players has filed a challenge in the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, arguing that playing on artificial turf at the Women's World Cup is discriminatory because the men play their showcase tournament on grass.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"A lot of these players (in) North America are used to playing on turf, so it won't be a major shock."

Canada's women's soccer coach John Herdman on the controversy over artificial turf in the 2015 World Cup in Canada

AUGMENTED REALITY

Stuck on 12 Across? Scan this image with your Metro News app for today's crossword and Sudoku answers. It's OK. No one's watching.

metro AR

→ See the full instructions on Metro's Voices page.

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
You will be your assertive self today and over the weekend. That's good because you need to let people know you're serious about your ambitions.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Something you have been working hard towards is most likely not worth the effort, but that's OK. Once you accept that, you can make other plans.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
The approaching full moon will affect you more than most because it takes place in your sign, and if you get through the next few days emotionally unscathed count yourself lucky!

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You seem to be on the defensive and that's probably no bad thing. Most likely no one is out to get you but it will pay you to be cautious anyway.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
You may be easygoing by nature but the approaching full moon warns you need to stay sharp over the next 48 hours. Also, don't say things just to make others feel good .

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Anyone who thinks you lack the killer instinct will have to revise their opinion now that you have a specific target to aim for. Nothing and no one will be allowed to stand in your way.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You may be rather emotional over the next few days but what of it? The planets indicate your tears are just as likely to be tears of joy as tears of sorrow.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You won't be happy to discover that someone has been digging around in your personal affairs, and quite right too. Not that you've got a guilty conscience but your business is private.

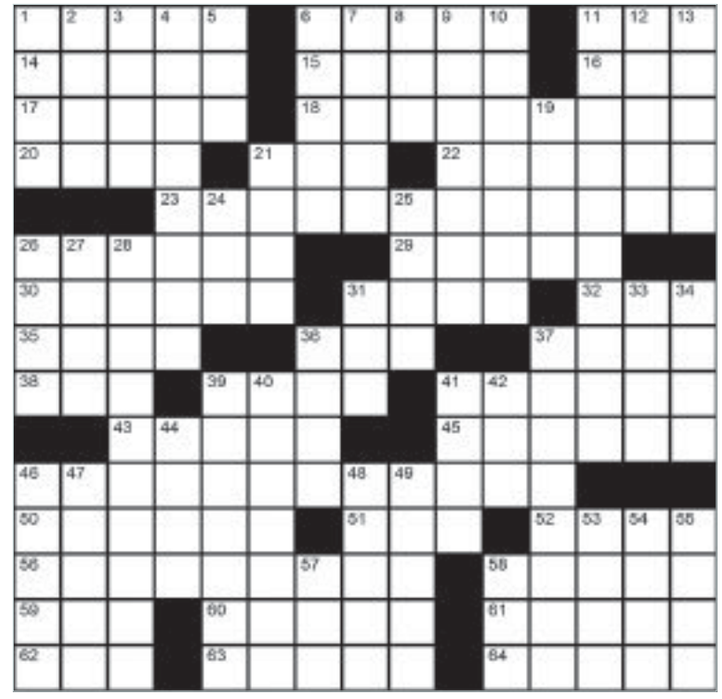
♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Your main task today is to look rationally at what is upsetting you. Stand back from your personal feelings and ask yourself if it is of any real importance. Most likely it isn't.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Try not to focus on details today because if you do you could miss the bigger picture. You will need to look both far and deep to stay a step ahead of rivals.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Accept that something you've been working on is not going to be the success you envisioned. Chances are though you will be quite happy to call it a day as it frees up time.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You may exchange a heated words with someone and the bad feeling will continue into the weekend. It will all be over come the start of next week.

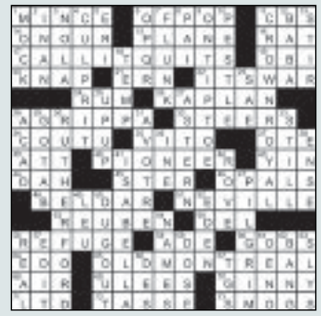
Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan



Across
1. Canadian actress Ms. Follows
6. Cop __ (Bargain in court)
11. Platter mixture
14. Lofty layer
15. Jennifer of "Flashdance" (1983)
16. __ _ hurry
17. Hockey great Mr. Hull
18. Travels across Europe
20. Wrapped garment
21. Outlying
22. Basket-__ sword
23. 1981 prehistoric movie for Canadian actress Rae Dawn Chong: 3 wds.
26. Clues/trail follower
29. Joe Cocker's "You __ __ Beautiful"
30. __ algebra
31. Sea eagles [var. sp.]
32. Non-verbal 'yes'
35. Hosp. readouts
36. 'Tour' suffix
37. Ms. Flynn Boyle
38. Techie erase button
39. Langley and Edwards, e.g., in The States
41. The Water-__ (Aquarius)
43. Basket fibre
45. 'Small Community Big Heart' in Manitoba
46. Blue Rodeo song: 2 wds.
50. Theatre workers
51. "Case of the Ex" songstress
52. __ Sea, in Central Asia
56. Navigation instruments
58. "Hard Sun" by __, aka Canadian musician Gordon Peterson
59. _ __ carte
60. Yo-Yo Ma's instrument
61. BC - Haida Gwaii: UNESCO World Heritage Site, __ Gwaay
62. Ottawa polit.
63. 50 Cent album: 'Get Rich or Die __"
64. Checks

Down
1. Gangster groupings
2. Ian Harding's role on "Pretty Little Liars", __ Fitz
3. Movie-__
4. "__ Roadshow"
5. Butterfly catcher
6. "Dancing Queen" group's
7. Rush drummer Neil
8. Lake: French
9. Manitoba village, 'An Age Friendly Community'
10. Ambitiously aims
11. French-English/ English-French book
12. Type of comic book artist
13. __ __ deux (Duet's dance)
19. Planet Melmac alien's
21. Canadian actor Brendan
24. Marathoner Ms. Pippig
25. Countryside sight
26. Wintertime hill ride
27. Admire
28. BC: __ River Falls Provincial Park
31. Feminine suffix
33. Baseball's Mr. Hershiser
34. Challenge
36. "_ __ to differ."
37. ZZ Top song: 2 wds.
39. Draw
40. One using dental thread
41. "Who Let the Dogs Out" by __ Men
42. Earlier, poetically
44. Bit of choreography
46. 1986 Corey Haim film
47. Serenader's song: "_ __ Mio"
48. Ms. Sande of song
49. Actress Cicely
53. Nutrition amts.
54. BTO's "You __ Seen Nothing Yet"
55. Cabin-creating components
57. Knavish
58. 'Capital' suffix

Yesterday's Crossword



Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

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Yesterday's Sudoku

6	5	8	4	2	7	9	1	3
1	3	4	8	9	6	5	7	2
7	9	2	3	1	5	8	6	4
2	8	6	7	5	1	3	4	9
9	1	3	2	6	4	7	5	8
4	7	5	9	8	3	6	2	1
5	4	7	1	3	9	2	8	6
8	6	9	5	4	2	1	3	7
3	2	1	6	7	8	4	9	5

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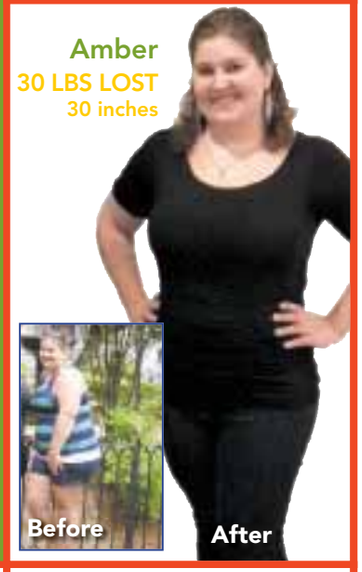
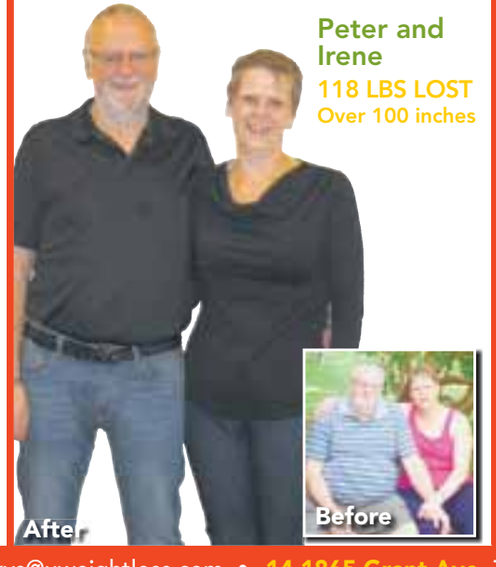


Amber
30 LBS LOST
30 inches

Shirley
92 LBS LOST
88 inches



Peter and Irene
118 LBS LOST
Over 100 inches

Sarah
65 LBS LOST
60 inches

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